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THE SEAMLESS ROBE

GUSTAV MELBY

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THE SEAMLESS ROBE

and Other Poems

GUSTAV MELBY

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BOSTON
RICHARD G. BADGER
The Gorham Press

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TO MY FRIEND
O. H. SKOTHEIM

MAY 7 '62
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THE SEAMLESS ROBE

A year ago, amid these tow'ring rocks,
I tarried in a meditative mood,
Before me stretched the meadows with their flocks,
The far off hills in evening's splendor stood,
The river gleamed, as now, among the trees,
Broad, deep and swift down to the cataract,
Whose voices, carried by the scented breeze,
With softer tones did make the sweetest pact.

The duties of the coming Sabbath day,
The discourse on its wondrous text and theme,
Like an increasing burden on me lay;
The more I thought, the greater it did seem,
For I lacked light, though heaven's effulgence shone,
The darkness of a system still was mine,
Until that evening, on this rock, alone,
I saw a vision, heard a voice divine.

A vision flashed upon the inner eye,
A vision fair, as of the Holy Grail,
Yea, greater, comprehending earth and sky
And all things which in heaven's bright glory trail,
The seamless robe; then I the sacred word,
Which speaks of this, could clearly understand,
And 'midst the holy awe God's tender voice I heard,
Pass like a loving whisper through the land.

And on the Sabbath morn I preached on this,
But only few did seem to share my joy,
While some, I fear, did take my words amiss,
And thought such teaching might true faith destroy;

Perhaps a few, with pity in their soul,
Did say: the day is warm, our pastor needs a rest,
Give him a month's vacation, in the fall,
He will again be in his very best.

* * * * *

At Treves, within a shrine of silver pure,
The Tunica inconsutilis rests,
Mured in Cathedral walls, sealed and secure,
A trophy from St. Helena's great quests
In Holy Land, where, as traditions tell,
It was preserved, e'en since that awful day,
When 'neath the cross by sordid lot it fell
Into one's hand which helped our Lord to slay.

And ever since the royal saint did give
This treasure to the church, with utmost care
It has been kept, few generations live
To gaze with wonder on this object rare.
Not long ago, howe'er, the Pope decreed,
The holy coat should to the light be brought,
Thus from its mural prison it was freed,
And eager multitudes its blessings sought.

" 'Twixt silken fabrics, from an age remote,
A brownish linen garment is inlaid,
The texture of the seamless holy coat,
Which Mary for her Son divine once made."
Thus did the wise and learned men declare
In name of church and state authority,
Though there's another coat which wants to share
Its nature and the same antiquity.

Though some may doubt, while many do believe,
It matters not to me, since I have seen
Its meaning in the vision of that eve,
In heaven's great splendor o'er the fields of green,
And ever more, a symbol most sublime,

That sacred, seamless robe of Christ shall be,
Of faith in God, in life and deeds of time,
The oneness of all things and their divinity.

THE SEAMLESS ROBE OF CREATION

He, who has once been on the boundless deep,
And on the distant rolling billows gazed,
He knows how they at last do seem to sleep,
By the horizon's mighty arms embrazed,
And while they blend into one light—the awe
He feels of vastness and immensity,
Yea, if he looks upon the evening-glow,
He sees the seamless robe of sky and sea.

Or he, who journeys on a summer's day,
O'er fair Dakota's prairies, he knows well,
How boundless seems the plains, how far away
Their grassy undulations rise and swell,
He knows how verdure, shading into blue,
With true affinity doth wed the sky,
Before him stretches a majestic view,
The seamless, royal robe of the Most High.

Or he, who climbs some Alpine mountain side,
To reach the summit of eternal snow,
At last perceives, how others far and wide,
Like monarchs stand with diadems aglow,
Their glory mingling in a sea of light,
Whose shores lie far beyond the circling globe,
He sees in part, for feeble is his sight,
The glitt'ring lustre of the seamless robe.

Or he, who braves the secret of the dark
And pathless forest, where no human hand
With felling axe has ever left a mark,
Where unmolested lofty giants stand
And hymn their deep, weird songs of centuries,

He knows the pow'r of solitude, a pain
Of fear steals o'er him, born of mysteries,
The music of the great Creator's train.

Or he, who on a moonlight summer night
Beholds the mist drawn o'er the river's bank,
Like one long snowy veil toward the light,
Along the fields and forests dewy, dank,
A mist which rises like a soulful prayer,
Uniting with horizon's silver clouds,
He knows how exquisitely fair,
That veil is which the God of night enshrouds.

Or he, who in the peaceful vale has stood,
'Midst fruitful orchards and abounding fields,
Where nature's ways are obviously good,
And every patch of ground its riches yields,
He has, perchance, within his bosom felt
That Paradise is more than fairy-lore,
Whose soft, idyllic beauty seems to melt
Into the light of an eternal shore.

For everywhere there is a unity
Of light and shade, a blending into one,
The color's transcendental harmony,
The mastery of which no artist won,
And everywhere there is the presence of
The Everlasting One, in whom we live,
Whose universe is ruled by law and love,
Whose royal robe but faintly we perceive.

Behold the seasons, how they come and go,
And changing almost imperceptibly,
From frozen streams and meadows decked with snow,
To fragrant flow'rs and warbling minstrelsy,
From summer's fulness of abundant life,
To autumn's mellow ripeness, tinged with frost,
And then again bleak winter's storm and strife,
In which that life exuberant seems lost.

Man marks the seasons in his calendar;
But nature knows no fixèd dates or lines,
Man's sharp divisions find no place with her,
The web of changing seasons she entwines
And weaves with slowness and unerring skill
Into the seamless garment of all things;
Thus summer's breeze and winter's blasts that kill,
Each of the season's oneness clearly sings.

The light of science strongly has revealed
The seamless robe in every living thing,
What once was dark, by mystery concealed,
Her magic touch did into daylight bring;
The protoplasmic life she taught us see,
The origin of species fact became,
And evolution more than theory,
And man the highest product of the same.

All life, in the beginning, is akin,
In oak or lion, rose or glowing worm,
Ere yet the potter's hands their work begin,
Of shaping each into its type and form;
But in those types the kinship still is traced,
And growth through ages to the perfect one,
While some, which once sweet nature's bosom graced,
Have spent themselves and are forever gone.

Great seems the gulf, and fixed, between the low
And flexuous fronds of life within the sea
And man, whose splendid ocean liners go
Across the main with proud security,
Yet, by the torch which science kindly holds
O'er the abyss, he may the darkness probe,
And link on link he sees until unfolds
Itself to him creation's seamless robe.

THE SEAMLESS ROBE OF HISTORY

From man's primeval state, when still he dwelt
In rocky caves and fashioned tools of stone,
To this most newborn hour, in which is felt
His pow'r, where reason occupies the throne,
There is a web which Providence has spun,
The web and woof of human history,
We know not when in hoary past begun,
Nor what its consummation yet shall be.

But this we know that 'twixt the knife of stone,
The spear of iron and the shield of brass
And this our age of steam and telephone,
There is a unity which came to pass,
Because of growth, and all what is today
Is possible, because of what has been,
For man has ever, on his upward way,
In torchlight of the past each new step seen.

Great races lived and died, whose millions are
To history unknown, consigned are they
To dark oblivion, their evening star
Of hope seems lost within the misty gray
Antiquity, and only ruins tell
In mystic language of their days of pow'r,
But ne'er did Providence sound forth the knell,
Of any race, before its day was o'er.

And such were ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome,
They built foundations for the modern world,
Yea, gave it fabrics for the crowning dome,
Though this, too, may into the dust be hurled;
And old Judea's teaching—ethics pure,
Which permeates the best that we can do,
And He whose life forever will endure,
Because it maketh others good and true.

Thus all the works of man, from age to age,

Are interwoven by an unseen hand,
The works of poet, prophet, artist, sage,
Are tested, as by fire, and those that stand
The trial, find a place within the woof,
Where their relation one may quite discern,
Though some are solitary and aloof,
Their influence the tide of life did turn.

Great Angelo, whose genius divine
Conceived such monument for papal tomb,
That not a church in Rome could it confine,
St. Peter's must be built to give it room,
In marble from Carrara did he hew
His fiery thought, into immortal forms,
And sparks from his impetuous chisel flew,
Which rose into the future thunderstorms.

To build this church the pope his coffers drained,
And took to sordid means recourse at last,
When emissaries to the world proclaimed,
That venial sins, not only of the past,
But uncommitted ones remission found,
If sinners large indulgences would buy,
Yea, when the coins within their chest did sound,
From Purgatory's fire the soul would fly.

The monk of Wittenberg, with ardent soul,
His thesis boldly on the church-door nailed,
A protest, sounding like a bugle-call
To freedom's battle, by the millions hailed,
The conflict was begun, the smoldering spark
Of liberty was fanned into a blaze,
And Europe saw its gleam amid the dark,
A harbinger of mankind's brighter days.

But back of Luther's Bible is the age
Of Renaissance, of Titian, Angelo,
And from the sacred, rugged German page
The glories of their common birthrights glow,
The rights of individuals to think

And read and speak in tongues of common men,
And thus it happens that we see a link
'Twixt these and Goethe's or a Schiller's pen.

Or would'st thou epochs of this land review,
Think of that fateful ship which struck our shore,
In sixteen hundred nineteen, when a crew
Of negro-slaves was landed, sick and sore,
The rise of that foul traffic which should gain
Such stronghold in a land made for the free,
And bring to millions untold grief and pain,
Yea, cause the greatest war of history.

A nobler scene to the succeeding year
Belongs, an epoch in itself sublime,
A band, whose faith did conquer every fear,
Who freedom cherished more than native clime,
Did land upon the storm-tossed Plymouth rock,
Which to our nation must an emblem be,
Approving what we are, or coldly mock
Our morals and our boasted liberty.

From one the principle of freedom sprang,
And slavery the other to us gave,
These two grew strong, until the country rang
With conflict for our liberty to save.
A race was freed, our union preserved,
But lo, the problem which doth still remain!
Yet, since the nation not from duty swerved,
God shall in time make every pathway plain.

Thus through the ages has that unseen hand
Been weaving man's endeavors, thread by thread,
From every nation, every clime and land
The ceaseless shuttle has been amply fed,
And still we hear it labor day and night,

To shape the seamless robe of history,
And it does seem the fabric grows more bright,
As it doth lengthen to its destiny.

THE SEAMLESS ROBE OF LIFE

Good morning, all ye shining poplar trees,
How glorious ye stand this August morn,
Once more your soft and soulful symphonies
Are on the cooling breezes to me borne;
Good morning, winding path, on which the gleams
Of sunlight dance, thou that lead'st into
The sweetest solitude of rest and dreams,
Of which my soul alone its riches knew.

It is a year since last I wandered here,
A year of life, which seems but as a day,
And when I think of this, a passing fear,
Like some dark shadow, falls upon my way,
And with it comes the query: what is life?
A winding path with checkered light and shade,
Where hope leads upward in a ceaseless strife,
Then downward into night and gloomy glade?

Ah no! not this alone, your symphony
Declares the truth I read an hour ago,
While I did look into an infant's eye
And mused: whence do we come, and whither go?
The glories of his homeland then I saw,
Reflections of its love and purity,
A light of joy which souls in heaven know,
Because of truth and perfect harmony.

Oh, happy childhood, when the soul yet sees
The light of that fair homeland mirrored here,
In rippling stream and on the woodland trees,
And on the distant hills when evening draweth
near,

When nature's joy within the breast doth well,
Like clearest fountain to its overflow,
A rapture which no human tongue can tell,
And which the pure in heart alone may know!

I have two boys, of ten and twelve, whose arms
Do match their blouse and overalls of brown,
Who through the day are guided by the charms
Of nature; often where the brook runs down
Into the quiet pond, their laughter rings,
For here they bask and swim to their content,
And here their navies with most precious things
Are o'er the deep to foreign countries sent.

And then, perhaps, the forest path again
Will know their loit'ring steps up to the hill,
The "cherry hill," where happy hours they spend,
And of the luscious berries have their fill,
Or may be in some cool secluded nook
They have a booth of foliage as home,
Where they are poring o'er some pleasant book,
Or simply rest, before they farther roam.

My happy boys, how soon these days must pass,
These days of freedom and felicities,
The glory which you now behold, alas!
Will dimmer grow, God grant it never flees
Entirely from your vision, but that youth
And manhood may be guided by its rays!
For without this ye cannot know the truth,
Nor know God's Spirit and exalted ways.

As morning gently merges into noon,
Across the cloudless blue with paces fleet,
Thus glide life's sunny morning-hours too soon
Into the zenith of the burning heat—,
And yet, what youth, whose hopes are strong and high,
Does not aspire to this with ardent soul,

That he may test his strength, 'midst those who vie
With men of pow'r, to reach life's highest goal?

* * * * * *

Behold the laborer that goeth forth
Into the stillness of the dewy morn,
Whose toil has taught him the intrinsic worth
Of those small fields which wave with grain and corn,
For he did wrest them from the virgin ground,
Where grew the stately pine and lofty elm,
Where winding paths of deer and moose were found,
And where the grizzly bear was monarch of the realm.

His arms are strong and bronzed, and on his face
Are marks of care, and sternness mixed with peace,
He thinks, may be, how he with axe and blaze
Shall in the autumn make his fields increase,
And dreams about the day, when he shall dwell
As lord of lands all cleared of stumps and stone,
And thus, obscure, he serves his country well,
An uncrowned king upon a forest throne.

The hardship of the battle he endures,
For there is light upon his path, the light
Now dimmer than of yore, which still ensures
The victory which follows manly fight,
Thus day doth follow day with sun and rain,
And summer ripens into autumn's gold,
And he through every struggle, joy and pain,
Doth for himself life's seamless robe unfold.

* * * *

Today the music of the poplar wood
Is swelling into wildest rage and roar,

And looking upward from my solitude,
I see the storm clouds 'neath the heavens soar,
A distant voice of thunder can be heard,
And o'er the dark horizon lurid gleams
Do flash with anger, nature has been stirred
From yesterday's sweet melodies and dreams.

Thus man amid his calm pursuits must know,
At times the storms of life, when clouds of fears
And sorrow overwhelm, and he must go,
E'en through the vale of death and blinding tears,
When foes beset and hopes are sinking fast,
When friends forsake, and God seems far away,
His lot with the unfortunate is cast,
And o'er his future evil lightnings play.

Yet, all of this is but the varied hue
And colour of life's robe, without a seam,
Its texture would be tame, if e'er we knew
Sweet, sunny calm which we so often deem
Heav'n's choicest benediction, while, forsooth
It is through storm and darkness that we gain
Light for our spirit from the torch of truth,
And fibre for the self which shall remain.

* * * * * *

The storm which drove me from the solitude,
That morn, has passed, and so have many days;
Again I dwell where fellowmen intrude,
And duty leads me into routine ways,
Nor do I follow like her lagging slave,
Unwillingly, I know her ways are best,
But just one hour for dreams my soul doth crave,
And without this it cannot find its rest.

This day the Lord hath made for our repose,

Our Sabbath-day, on which our hearts should know
The peace and joy of His pure life who rose
From death and grave to banish human woe;
How calm the afternoon, how clear the sky,
What sweet tranquillity broods o'er the earth!
While from the church the worshippers pass by,
Back to the smiling farm and peaceful hearth.

'Mongst these an aged man I now discern,
Whose gait has heaviness, whose sight is dim,
Whose thoughts devoutly toward life's evening turn,
To whom no longer death seems cold and grim,
But like a messenger who soon shall call
Him home with joy from earth's fair harvest-scene,
And therefore, while the evening shadows fall,
He sees a gleam which makes his soul serene.

Yea, like the birds which in the autumn night
Draw southward speedily from northern lakes,
Man's spirit through the darkness makes its flight,
To realms where the immortal daylight breaks,
And life was but a summer's pilgrimage
Of play and love, of toil and shattered nest,
And when the winter storms begin to rage,
They help the pilgrim homeward to his rest.

And having reached the better summerland,
Where in an endless day his spirit dwells,
This life's enigma he shall understand
And say: "The Father doeth all things well."
Upon life's seamless robe he then shall gaze
And find it purged from every travel-stain,
For with the Master is abundant grace
And balm for every earthly wound and pain.

NARRATIVE POEMS

THE MISSIONARY

The sun's last crimson beams were growing dim
And specter-like above the distant rim
Of hazy sky and endless plains of snow;
And from the north a chilling blast did blow,
Which whirled the sparkling prisms like a spray
Of ocean billows on a stormy day,
Then shaped it into drifts, where'er was found
A lodging place, and most of all around
The scattered huts of homesteaders, where dwelt
Both men and women who this evening felt
The loneliness of that bleak, frozen waste
More keenly than before, since memories did haste
Upon them from their loved ones in the east,
(Who soon with joy should gather to the feast,)
For this was Christmas eve, and with the morn
The purest joy, that man does know, is born,
A joy, which to be full, must share its glow
With those whom we as friends and kindred know.
The twilight deeper grew, but blackest night
Could not unfold her robe, the subtle light
Which fields of white united with the moon,
The new, sharp moon, did her deny that boon;
Then from the cold, blue ridges in the north
A shrill, unearthly chorus issued forth,
The hungry coyotes yelping loud and long,—
Indeed a weird, unhappy Christmas song.
In one small sod house dwelt a family
Of loving parents and a child, these three.
The child, a girl, just ten years old, was ill
With fever, restless day and night until
This eve, when she grew calm and gained her mind,
And burdened parents too, new hope did find;
With joy they o'er her bent, half whispering
Their love-charged words, then suddenly one thing

Seemed all her consciousness to occupy;
With feeble voice, but almost with a cry,
She asked: "Oh, mamma, will not Christmas soon
be here?"
To which her mother answered: "This, my dear,
Is Christmas evening." Whereupon the child
With many queries and with rapture wild
Besought her mother to relate, to tell
Her of the Santa and the Christmas bell,
Of angels singing 'neath the lustrous star
Of Bethlehem, and if those angels are
Still hymning forth their anthems of great joy,
If Christ is still a little baby boy
And in a manger laid, to which the sweet,
But brief replies would come, enough to meet
The childish eagerness, more to abate
A growing tension which might seal her fate.
Thus soothed by her dear mother's voice she lay
With pallid face and gazed up to the gray
And lowly ceiling, made of boards unplaned;
Long time she dreamed, then suddenly exclaimed:
"Oh, mamma, papa listen! can you hear
The Christmas bells? They sound so very near."
To which the father said with wistful eye:
"It was the wind, or else the coyote's cry
You heard, my child," while he caressed her brow.
A pause again, then: "Papa, hear them now!"
And both the parents felt a burning tear
Steal forth, and in their hearts a dreadful fear
Of her condition, when, could it be true?
They heard a tinkling, faint, which louder grew,
Whene'er the howling windgusts calmed away:
Then out the father went, nor did he stay
But moments few before he learned that some
Belated traveler to them would come.
His sleighbells sounded now full merrily,
A Christmas visitor, who could it be?

* * * * * *

Outside this little home of Mister Goult
A stranger made a necessary halt;
He gave his name and asked if lodging might
Be granted him and horse just over night;
And straightway came the answer firm and kind:
"You are most welcome, sir, if you don't mind
The humbleness both of the bed and board,
Which we as frontier dwellers can afford."
The stranger thanked him with a heartfelt word;
Then numb and stiff with cold at once bestirred
Himself out of his sleigh. The weary steed
Was soon from thills and frosty harness freed,
And placed within a stable thatched with hay,
O'er which a drift of snow now partly lay.
Then was the stranger guided, like a guest,
Into the house, but with this one request,
To tarry in the first room of the two,
Where with much cheer the kitchen fire did glow.
Here, while he warmed himself, he slowly told,
In tone suppressed, how through the snow and cold
He travelled had, that livelong day, to reach
A certain place, where he next day should preach,
But having lost his way was glad to find
A refuge from the night's death-dealing wind.

* * * * * *

I doubt if priest or parson ever came
To any home, in their great Master's name,
And found a warmer welcome than this man,
This missionary from the east; who can
Describe the cheer his coming brought, when they
Did learn he knew their people far away
In Maine? Yea, had one of their very own
Arrived that night he could not have been shown
A kindlier reception, at an hour
When anxious care did hold them in its power.

With relish did he sup, then asked to see
The child within, for he did hope to be
Of help to her. A case of medicine
He carried with him which had often been
A source of help to suff'rers on the plain,
Where doctor's aid one hardly could obtain.
He felt her pulse, and straightway knew,
That one small dose of aconite would do
Away, to some extent, with fever's fire;
He into all the symptoms did inquire
And found the child with typhoid rather low,
Then in the lamplight's dim and ruddy glow
He mixed the drugs and clear directions gave,
While fixedly her large blue eyes did gaze
Into his smooth, benignant, manly face.
She thought, perhaps, that he was Santa Claus,
But whisp'ring asked her mother who he was;
And when she learned he was a man of God,
Who through the wintry waste his way did plod,
To preach glad tidings of great joy to all,
That Christ was born to save both great and small,
She asked if he the Christmas bells had heard,
And when he marked how deeply she was stirred
About this question, he did acquiesce,
For fair illusions can becalm and bless,
And thus she rest obtained, sweet saving sleep,
And death was yet not destined her to reap.

* * * * * *

Twelve years have passed since then, and o'er the plain
One sees the homes and fields of golden grain,
And in their midst a church spire guides the eye
Up to the blue, to Him who rules on high,
For not by bread alone doth mankind live,
But by the word divine which life can give,
A monument to him whom heaven sent

That Christmas eve, who years of labor spent
Among the people and a church did found,
Whose many souls in Christian works abound.
And in this church each Sabbath you may hear
The organ played by her, upon whose ear
The music of the sleighbells fell that night.
She is a woman now, and in her bright
Blue eyes there is a gleam of soulfulness
And happy temper which does cheer and bless;
But on each Christmas eve these eyes grow dim
With grateful tears when she remembers him,
Who through the wintry storms did come to save
Her life and soul, and o'er whose honored grave
The church bells peal their joyous Christmas
chime
With praise to God, in this far western clime.

Among the Vikings bold, who came
To Erin's Isle, there was no name
So much adored as Synneva's,
And no young warrior let pass
Its music o'er his lips, without
He felt it made his heart devout
With love for purest womanhood,
And he allegiance to the Rood
Would swear and mighty Thor disdain,
If he her favor could obtain.

And many heroes came and laid
Their fame and wealth before this maid,
But each returned a humbler swain,
With wounded love to sail the main.
Among those suitors there was one
Whose ardor was surpassed by none,
Young Thorfin, Norse in mind and build,
Who could his broad sword better wield,
Than any man of twenty-three,
A man of strength and bravery,
Tall, fair and with a dreamer's face,
A true type of the Viking race;
The owner of an isle and men
On Norway's coast, among his ken
An honored chief whom they obeyed;
On foreign shores sometimes they preyed,
Rich plunder took and sailed for home;
But now to Erin he had come
Fair Synneva as bride to win,
Nor had his will yet thwarted been
In what he sought; the royal hall
Received him well and offered all
The comfort he and his did need,
The king, his host, with him agreed
In all things well, e'en Synneva

Should him be giv'n, if by the way
Of free consent she might be won,
She, who his presence now did shun.

For some time had she planned to leave
The Em'rald Isle, though that would grieve
Her noble soul, but rather this
Than to be stained by pagan's kiss,
For she already wedded was
To Christ and to his holy cause;
And thus resolved, that selfsame night
She entered on her fateful flight,
And with few followers, a band
Of holy men, set out from land.
With sorrow keen she left her home
For dangers on the briny foam,
And as the ship cut loose from shore,
She seemed to know that never more
Should this fair isle of purest green
By her be trod, or even seen.
The full moon played upon the deep,
Which like a giant seemed asleep,
And by a gentle breeze caressed,
A breeze that only slowly pressed
Their little ship with sail outspread,
A breeze that played around the head
Of Synneva, her raven hair
And pallid face, divinely fair,
Which had a glory of the sheen
That mortal eye hath seldom seen.
A tear was trembling in her eye,
While lifted was her gaze on high,
A grief was burning in her heart,
Because from Erin she must part,
But in that look a prayer lay
That heav'n would guide them on their way
O'er treach'rous seas to unknown land,
And oft did pray this little band.

As hours rolled by, the gentle breeze
Into a strong wind did increase,
The sea woke from its calm repose,
And boist'rous billows soon arose,
The moon behind dark clouds did hide;
No longer pleasantly did glide
The ship, yet with a noble breast
It cleaved the angry ocean's crest.

The holy men were not unused
To sail and oars, for often cruised
They had the stormy seas, to reach
The people they were wont to teach.
So without fear they steered the skiff,
Until the shore, its last lone cliff,
Was lost from view, and now only
The sea and heaven's wide canopy
Were visible, which darker grew
And angrier, as on they flew.

The wind rose to a mighty gale
And havoc played with mast and sail,
Then, without much avail, recourse
They took to rather clumsy oars,
And they were driv'n and were tost
By storm and wave, until they lost
Their course; the raging element
Now on destruction seemed intent.
Soon lifted on a tow'ring wave,
Then lowered to a yawning grave,
Nor did the gale abate the least,
Till crimson day rose in the east,
Then came a respite from the woes
Of night and all her deathlike throes;
How haggard now their faces turned
To where Aurora's torches burned,
And pallid lips were moved with praise
To heaven for morn's first cheerful rays.

Resumed, the waves which long had lain
Asleep, now rose with many sighs;
As with a tapestry the skies
Were overcast, behind the which
The lamp of night did give to each
Strange, changing figure its contour,
Some dark, and some of silver pure.
How weird their shadows rose and fell
Upon the ocean's growing swell!
Like flitting ghosts with evil glee
They moved across the fretful sea,
And seemed like omens of dark dread
To those whose ship now swiftly sped.

With every slow advancing hour
Increased the wind's afflicting power,
And had the former night's distress
Been grievous, this one's was not less,
And anguish came upon the group,
Who manned the struggling little sloop.
Ev'n Synneva at last did feel
How childlike trust to fear must yield,
When hell its demons liberate,
To show the fury of their hate,
To shriek with an unearthly joy
Because a life they may destroy;
Her pray'rs then seemed of no avail,
When torn and rent went down the sail,
When crushing waves did overwhelm
The use of oars and steering helm,
When carried like a wooden chip
Upon the billows was their ship,
Left to its fate to sink or drift;
Just then was seen a clear, wide rift
Among the clouds, and glory streamed
Upon their heads; the light which beamed
On crested waves, a craft revealed,
A Viking's ship, which onward keeled,
With sail half hoisted, bearing fast

Upon them, Synneva at last
Cried out in terror, for she knew
That vessel's chief did her pursue.

As slowly it did overtake
The helpless ship, its captain spake,
In voice above the billows' roar,
And what they heard this message bore:
"Oh, Synneva, thou canst not flee
From Thorfin o'er this boist'rous sea,
For he at home is here and knows
How to control each wind that blows,
But ye, already lost and doomed,
Must in the deep soon be entombed.
Once more my love I proffer thee,
And if my bride thou willingly
Wilt be, thy holy men I'll grant,
That they their faith with us shall plant,
But if thou still refusest me,
This shall their last hour surely be,
Thou shalt be mine by force, and they
Into the deep shall find their way;
Therefore make choice without delay,
And let thy wisdom rule, I pray!"

She answered with a subdued cry:
"Thy impudence I do defy,
For though thy men outnumber mine,
Although thy dragon hews the brine
With haughty brow, while we seem lost,
Yea worse, into thy power tost,
Thy proffer I disdain, refuse,
And with these men my lot I choose;
But know, that in the darkest hour,
Our God shall show his saving pow'r!"

The Vikings straightway sought to rope
Synneva's ship, but could not cope
With heaving sea and madding gale.

Poor Synneva, her tender youth
All this did suffer for the truth,
But she had faith which made her strong
And joy which issued forth in song.

SYNNEVA'S HYMN

Out of the deep we praise thee,
Father of love and light,
Out of the deep we praise thee
For guarding us through the night!

The heavens declare thy glory
The ocean thy greatness sounds,
Sea gulls on giddy pinions
Tell how thy care abounds.

Saviour, thy kind indulgence
For all our sins we pray,
Sweet as the sun's effulgence
May it be ours today!

The sea grew calm, the air serene,
At noonday not a cloud was seen,
But far against the southern sky
A sail they dimly could descry,
And dark forebodings brought this sight,
Yea, greater fear, than did the night;
Their mast was broken, sail was rent,
Their strength in rowing well nigh spent;

Then Synneva with word and deed
Her men did cheer to greater speed,
While two the sail and mast did mend,
The other two their strength did bend
Upon the oars, nor did they fail
To increase distance from that sail.
And Synneva poured out the wine,
Which spurned the hardship of the brine,
And dauntless did they northward wend,
Till twilight with the sea did blend.

The wind its raving o'er the main

A cloud of darkness then did veil
The shining orb, but dimly could
The Vikings see the men in hood,
Who prayed that God would intervene,
When, strange to tell, a dazzling sheen
Encircled Synneva; her face
In heavenly radiance appeared,
A light which Thorfin's sailors feared,
It caused the suitor's heart to sink,
No more of capture did he think,
But lifted sail and distance sought
From one whose face such marvels wrought.

The monks, who thus God's presence saw,
Were filled with happiness and awe,
Their voices mingled jubilant
In sweet *Te Deum's* holy chant,
And Synneva they knew indeed
A saint was now by heaven's meed,
And never would they harbor fear,
So long as she was only near.

Now feeling that they were secure
In heaven's hand, they did endure
The struggles of the night, content
That borne by wind and wave they went
Toward shores, which God should them provide,
Though yet no land had been espied.

For many days they drifted far,
And only sun and guiding star
Betokened unto them their way,
Which o'er Atlantic's billows lay;
At last with joy their hearts did leap,
When they descried across the deep
The outline of a rugged strand
Where they were destined soon to land.

At noon they reached a narrow sound,
Inside a reef, where rest they found,

And as firm land again they trod,
They knelt with heartfelt praise to God,
But knew not yet, that His strong hand
Had guided them to Thorfin's land.

Now, Silje was this island's name,
To which this company thus came,
A rocky place, where was a cave
Of deep recess, which shelter gave,
And this their home they chose to call,
And church, for by the inner wall
They placed a cross, an altar made,
On which a prayer book was laid,
And consecrated all to Him,
Who saved them from destruction grim.

Here did the monks say daily mass,
Here Synneva long hours did pass
In meditation sweet and deep,
But sometimes she was seen to weep,
When on the shore she stood and gazed
Upon the sunlit sea, embrazed
By heaven's arms, perhaps she then
Longed back to Erin's shores again.

Their daily tasks those friars knew,
One caught the fish, another slew
The wild-duck on her secret nest,
For they must live, and none yet wist
If other men did here exist,
Until one day a strolling sheep
Into their sacred cave did peep;
And then, quite rightly, they surmised
That other homes this isle comprised.
For weeks this sheep about them stayed,
They wanted food; one of them said:
"God sent it for our daily need,"
And straightway did its bosom bleed,
Then did they break their holy fast
With thankfulness for rich repast.

One day a grizzly visaged man
Gazed upon them, then turned and ran
Fear stricken, for this pagan boor
Such hooded folk ne'er saw before;
The sheep, he sought, he quite forgot,
While hast'ning homeward to his cot.
Thence went he to his master's house,
To Thorfin's, who did then carouse
With Haakon Earl, the petty king;
And when they heard about this thing,
They left the festive board in search
Of pirates, whom they thought did lurch
About the shore, among the rocks
To pilfer from the peasant's flocks,
Though Thorfin's heart felt it might be
Sweet Synnev' and her company.

The evening sun glowed on the fjord,
When Thorfin and his royal lord,
With many followers, drew near
The sacred cave with sword and spear,
Nor of their coming unaware
Were they who took their refuge there,
Since they had seen them far away,
And gathered by the cross to pray
For heav'n's defence against the foe,
And while they thus did worship, lo!
Strange things occurred which terrified
These heathen men, whom God denied
An entrance to the sacred place,
And shook the earth before their face;
They saw it and in terror reeled
When mighty blocks fell down and sealed
The opening of the cave, a tomb
It now became, also the doom
Of its imprisoned refugees
Who perished here in agonies.

In after years, out from this pile,
A light shone brightly o'er the isle,
And when King Olaf Trygvason
Did learn of this, he went upon
A journey thither; here he found
The corpse of Synneva, yet sound,
Hid in the cliff, whence came the light
Illumining the gloomy night.
The king, who on the Christ believed,
A miracle of God perceived,
And that a saint was resting here;
Therefore he bid his people rear
A church upon this rock to her,
Through whom God blessings would confer.

The church was built, her sacred bones
Were placed beneath the Altar stones,
And hither came from far and near
Half pagan folk God's word to hear,
And Synneva's sweet name grew strong
In all the people's prayers and song,
A nation's saint she came to be,
This Irish maid—cast from the sea.

And Thorfin did at last repent,
Oft in this shrine long hours he spent
In love's devotion, which the cross
Had purged from every earthly dross,
And in the purity of soul,
He on her name, and God did call;
The light, from which he once did flee,
He earnestly now longed to see,
And it is said that this he saw,
Like brightness of the glitt'ring snow,
And in its glory saw her stand,
With blessing in uplifted hand,
That selfsame day he loudly cried:
"My Synneva I've found!" and died.

DAMON AND PYTHIAS

Dedicated to the Order of the Knights of Pythias.

From ancient Syracuse, which like a queen
Sat on the vineclad shores of Sicily,
As in a dream, while gazing on the sheen
And amber of the great Ionian Sea,
Comes one sweet tale, fit theme for minstrelsy,
Sweet as the morning light, whose rosy hue
Plays o'er the rippling deep, where shadows flee
Before the coming day, a tale as true
And deathless as man's lore of friendship ever knew.

The tale of Damon and of Pythias,
Two noble Pythagoreans of old,
Who, when the city's liberty did pass
Into a tyrant's hand, showed of what mould
Man may be made when trials do unfold
His magnanimity; fierce is the fire
That separates ignoble dross from gold,
Fierce was that crucible of despot's ire
From which a love sprang forth which thousand hearts inspire.

Great Damon, mighty in the Senate hall,
Did combat lavish bribe and treachery,
Which Dionysius used to enthrall
Both law and sword of Syracuse the free,
And fury seized his soul when he did see,
How traitors left the city's citadel
Into his hands, on such a soldiery
His words of censure like Jove's thunder fell;
Then on him rushed the traitors with a fiendish yell.

The soldier, Pythias, with firm command
The tumult quelled and rescued Damon's life,
Who gratefully did clasp his saviour's hand,
Each pledging friendship through their country's strife,
And knowing now that treason's hour was rife,
Into the Senate chamber Damon rushed,
And he who could not lawlessness connive,
When he saw bands of soldiers there, he blushed
With indignation, that thus justice should be crushed.

In vain he bids the soldiers to depart.
In vain a forceful protest does he bring,
His words but shouts of acclamation start,
And Dionysius is chosen king,
This act, to him, is like a serpent's sting,
The death-thrust to the people's liberty,
And frenzied on the despot he does fling
Himself with gleaming dagger, thus to free
His country from the all impending tyranny.

Swift as the hawk when on its prey it swoops,
Strong hands were at that instant on him laid,
And he was rudely bound by gold-bought troops,
Who thus their duty shamefully betrayed,
And Dionysius, commanding, said,
In voice that trembled both in wrath and fear:
"Take ye this villain hence and let his head,
This very eve, be lifted on your spear,
While all my faithful people scoff and jeer!"

With proud disdain he listened to his doom,
Assured within himself that it would be
His crown of glory, when around his tomb
The future Syracuse should gather free,
He sought no mercy, only this one plea
He with a voice of deepest pathos spake:
"Permit me, ere I die, my home to see,
With wife and child a last farewell to take,
Then in my blood your headsman's axe its thirst
may slake."

A heartless smile passed o'er the tyrant's face,
As he refused the prisoner's request,
And Damon finding him devoid of grace,
With sorrow for his loved ones grew opprest.
But at this moment friendship's interest
And sacrificial love, themselves revealed,
Here was enacted that exalted test
Of truest friendship which has e'er appealed
To noble manhood, and its heroism sealed.

Reports of the new king and Damon's plight
Had come to Pythias, in that glad hour
When he should realize his heart's delight,
To lead his fair Calanthe to the bow'r
Of wedded bliss, but ere the rite was o'er
Which made them one, he hastened to the seat
Where Dionysius claimed royal pow'r,
And as he learned of Damon's sad defeat
He fell before the king and thus did him entreat:

"As thou a father and a husband art,
Hear me, oh, king, for this my friend in chains,
Let Damon to his villa now depart,
To see his wife and child, ere yet the pains

Of death he suffer must; there yet remains
A goodly portion of this day, till eve
Oh, respite him! his dungeon me retains,
My life for his return as pledge I give,
Grant this, oh, king, and may thy glory ever live!"

Both admiration and unconscious awe
Played on the face of Dionysius,
To him selfseeking was the highest law,
Nor did he dream that man could ever thus
Make sacrifice so great and generous,
E'en for a friend to whom his soul might cling,
And now this soldier, most illustrious,
Who victories from stubborn foes did wring,
Such offer for a friend with heartfelt plea doth bring.

And he did fear the popularity
Of Pythias among the men of sword,
Since he might cause revolt and enmity
Amid the army, by a hostile word,
A thing he could not at this time afford,
Therefore he chose to grant his ardent pray'r:
"Arise," he said, "and stand before thy lord!
Most eloquent thy words of pleading are
And for thy sake this change of sentence I declare.

"Thy hostage is accepted, Damon may
Betake himself this instant to his home,
But if he tarries till the sun's last ray
Is gilding Syracuse, its tow'rs and dome,
If then he does not to the scaffold come,
Thou must for him thy noble head lay down,
Thy pray'r is heard; remove the shackles from
The hands of Damon and place them around
Those of his friend, and lead him to his dungeon, bound!"

Then Damon mounts his charger and with speed
Starts for his home, full many leagues away;
It was his master's pride, a noble steed,
Which to the uttermost was tried that day,
And willingly it did his lord obey;
Two hours had passed when on the mountain side,
Among the vineyards which o'er-looked the bay,
He halted weary, but by one espied,
Who met him with a love as of a waiting bride.

We leave him here, and to his friend return,
Who through a great temptation now must go;
Soon as Calanthe of his plight did learn,
Of his deliverance alone would know,
And that she loved him she did truly show,
She sought the tyrant's help who with a smile
Assured her that the evening breeze would blow
Her and her lover's ship to some fair isle,
"For love and liberty will Pythias beguile."

And Dionysius himself was prone
To tempt a friendship such as witnessed here,
Disguised in habit, countenance and tone,
He leads Calanthe to the dungeon drear,
And as to Pythias she draweth near,
She falls upon him with a tearful cry;
"Oh, Pythias, my lover, thou most dear
To me, thou shall not linger here to die,
To bear us hence our ship is ready, let us fly!"

And Dionysius: "Oh, friend, perceive,
That it is folly here to linger now,
Since thus thy liberty thou may'st retrieve,
Think not that Damon to his tendered vow
Can faithful prove, for all his household's love
To hinder his return a thousand ways
Will find, and thou this eve thy head must bow
Upon the block, come, leave this place
And save thyself and her whose love does thee embrace!"

Poor Pythias, whose soul is in despair,
Is struggling 'twixt two duties heaven-born,
He hesitates, he looks upon the fair,
By whose imploring his strong heart is torn;
But he to Damon constancy has sworn,
And can not now unmanly fail his trust.
So he exclaims in pain and half in scorn:
"Oh, tempt me not, for ye should know I must
Be true to friendship's pact or ne'er again be just."

He conquers o'er his love-rebellious heart,
And soothes Calanthe with a fond adieu,
She lingers, and the king must help to part
The weeping woman from her lover true,
When he has learned that they cannot undo
The firm resolve which Pythias does bind,
Such friendship must even his cold heart imbue
With Brother spirit, latent in mankind,
And wonder, touched with sympathy invades his mind.

The afternoon is most delectable,
The air with pleasure satiated is,
All nature seems held by a potent spell,
In which is love, sweet harmony and bliss,
And heav'n's deep blue the placid sea doth kiss.
The noon-hour wind has ceased, and all is calm;
O'er every orchard's luscious luxuries
There hangs a fragrance, like a soothing balm,
A cup o'er-running like that of the Shepherd-psalm.

But this to Damon and his household has
No consolation in an hour of woe,
And as the sand runs out from time's clear glass,
All hope and joy out of his heart-life flow.
The pleading of his spouse who cannot trow,
That he will leave them thus, but for to die,
The smiling babe, who in his bed does crow,

The firmness of his purpose sorely try,
And with heart-rending sorrow he bids them
good-bye.

He seeks his palfrey, but to his dismay,
He finds it dead; upon his knees a slave
Confession makes, that he the horse did slay,
That he his master's life perchance might save.
"As he is, thou should'st be, oh, foolish knave,
Who seeks to check my course to duty wed,
The sun is slanting toward the western wave,
Seek me another steed, or thou art dead!"
The faithful slave obeys, but bows in grief his
head.

The passing moments with suspense increase,
And while the evening shadows slowly creep
About the walls of Syracuse, like bees
The mob swarms to the place where death would
reap
A hero, but which one? their tongues doth keep
With wonder wagging. Now is a cordon thrown
By mail-clad men and spears, between which peep
The curious, some laugh, and others moan,
While looking on the block where now the last ray
shone.

The western sky with matchless beauty glows,
As this eventful day in triumph dies,
A trembling gold into rich crimson flows,
Symbolic of the evening's sacrifice.
"Behold they come," the multitude now cries;
The king and courtiers come and take their place,
Where naught the scene does hinder from their
eyes,
And then the headsman with black-vizored face,
Then Pythias on whom the shouting people gaze.

His mien betrays no fear, nor does he seem
To see, nor hear the throng, now tension-strung,

He is absorbed as in a pleasant dream,
But as the death knell from the tow'r is rung,
He says: "Tell Damon that I him forgive,
That not as craven to this life I cling,
But gladly die, that he perchance may live,
And that the fates have hindered him, I do believe."

Upon the executioner's command,
He kneels and places on the block his head,
The axe is lifted, but another's hand
Arrests it ere the hero's blood is shed,
A tumult rises, every eye is led
To seek the rider who speeds o'er the hill,
He waves a signal which is crimson red.
" 'Tis Damon!" and a thousand voices fill
The air with cheers which seem an omen of good will.

He soon draws near, the crowd a passage makes,
And from his foaming charger he doth leap,
And through the soldiers' cordon straightway breaks,
Embracing Pythias, these strong men weep.
A murmur of emotion, like a deep
And distant thunder, now is heard,
Which breaks into acclaims that storm-like sweep
The tyrant from his seat, he also stirred,
Arising lifts his hand, and all await his word:

"This day, my people, have our eyes beheld
A friendship such as nowhere else is found,
A love, like this, the gods alone do weld
Into a chain by which these hearts are bound,
With admiration and respect profound,
I, Dionysius do now proclaim
Their life and liberty; let heralds sound,
The pardon I attach to Damon's name,
Yea, sound the music of their everlasting fame!"

RACHEL

The Arrival

O'er Haran's hills a stranger came,
A lonely, way-worn pilgrim he,
On whom there lay a brother's blame,
An anger, causing him to flee.

He paused and down the valley gazed,
His eyes were met with scenes of peace,
Large flocks in flow'ry meadows grazed,
Or rested by a well in ease.

He hastened to the shepherd band,
That lingered round the covered well,
In friendly greeting raised his hand,
Then prostrate on his face he fell.

Saluting thus, to them he said:
"My brethren of what land are ye?"
And straightway they this answer made:
"Of this, of Haran's land are we."

"And know ye Laban, Nahor's son;
Can ye of him good tidings tell?"
Quoth they, "we know him, and there's none
More blest than he, and none so well;

"Ere long his daughter Rachel leads
Her father's sheep down to this place;
Behold they feed in yonder meads
And follow gently in her ways!"

He said: "Lo, it is yet high day!
Give ye the thirsty flocks to drink;
Then into pastures guide their way."
Did they divine what he did think?

For they refused and said: "Not till
The flocks together gathered be,
Can we remove the stone and fill
The empty troughs thou here dost see."

And while he spake with them, behold
Young Rachel with her sheep drew nigh,
They followed her, as to the fold,
And 'round her did the lambkins cry.

When Jacob now the maid beheld,
His heart with ecstasy did leap,
He rolled the stone from off the well
And watered Laban's thirsty sheep.

And then he kissed her dainty hand,
And lifted up his voice and wept
For joy, that he had reached this land,
And God his promises had kept.

But most of all, because his heart
Was smitten, through the sense of sight,
By Love's excruciating dart,
A suff'ring mingled with delight.

A maiden, in her tender years,
Tall, slender and of winsome grace;
What joy shone through his furtive tears,
As he gazed on her comely face!

Her bright dark eyes betrayed her soul,
A soul of tenderness and dreams,
Such eyes before which strong men fall
And fear them more than javelin's gleams.

Her features seemed as chiseled by
Some sculptor's hand in marble pure,
On which the Oriental sky,
Had put a tint of bronze—for sure.

And in her lips and cheeks did glow
The color of a noble blood,
Sweet as when morning breezes blow
Upon the pink rose' opening bud.

Dark, as the night, her tresses lay
Upon her neck and shoulders bare,
With whom the gentle breeze did play
Such, that an artist might despair.

Her voice was like the brooklet's song,
Which gently falls o'er rounded stones,
Melodious and soft, yet strong,
When lifted to commanding tones.

"Thou art a stranger here, I ween,
What is thy name and errand, pray?"
She said with half forbidding mien,
And drew her hand from his away.

"I am thy father's sister's son,
Beersheba is my native home,
Whence Javeh led my footsteps on,
So hither I at last might come."

On hearing this she swiftly ran,
And o'er the hillside flit away,
To tell her father of this man
And all the things which he did say.

These tidings came to Laban's ear
Like pleasant music from afar,
Rebekah was to him most dear,
Her son, her hope and morning-star.

And speedily he went to meet
His kinsman, with a true embrace,
And with a kiss he did him greet,
With fondness looked upon his face,

And brought him to his home where he
  Dwelt many days as honored guest,
For ancient hospitality,
  Was always lavish, at its best.

And when a month had past, they thought
  Of occupation, Laban said:
"Though thou my brother art, for naught
  Thou shalt not serve, but must be paid.

"Tell me what shall thy wages be?"
  And Jacob answered, half in fears;
"Give Rachel as a wife to me,
  And I will serve thee seven years."

And Laban said: "It better is
  That I should give her unto thee
Than to another man, and this
  Is now my wish: abide with me."

The Years of Service

A princely task was Laban's lot,
  For princes owned and tended sheep,
Yea, e'en their daughters found it not
  Unpleasant work the flocks to keep;

But loved to roam o'er grassy plains,
  And linger near the laughing brook,
And with its music blend the strains
  Of songs amid some shady nook.

To meet a lover there, perchance,
  Once more his troth to hear him plight,
To know the sweetness of love's trance,
  To dream youth's dreams of pure delight.

And Jacob often Rachel met
In many a languid afternoon,
Or when the summer sun had set,
Succeeded by a clear, full moon.

When the contented flocks were safe
Within the fold, while night its balm
Of cooling dew to nature gave,
For weariness, sweet rest and calm.

When from the rose and lily rare,
And host of flowers in mead, on hill,
Such perfume mingled with the air,
As only nature can distil.

Whose potion brings the poet's mind
Within the realm of fairy-land,
Where forms of beauty dance and bind
Sweet garlands with a magic hand;

And wind them round the lovers' soul,
To make them one in love's pure kiss,
To make true love their best, their all,
Their Paradise of heavenly bliss.

Each lirk of flowers a happy thought,
Their mingled fragrance one sweet dream,
With all their varied hues inwrought,
A wreath where golden petals gleam.

Such was the love of these young hearts,
A bond that daily stronger grew,
And time, which often change imparts,
No fickle lapses in them knew.

When on such nights within her eye
He read love's boundless mystery,
He wist that it would never die,
But blossom through eternity.

And such a love made seven years
Seem like so many fleeting days,
For love its burdens gladly bears,
And pleasure finds in duty's ways.

The Wedding

To Laban's home, from hills and plains,
The wedding-guests did wend their way,
And shepherds with their princely trains,
Were decked in gold and colors gay.

All bidden to the nuptial-feast,
A feast of seven days to be,
For in the far-off ancient East,
This was man's greatest jubilee.

The maidens sang, the young men told
Dark riddles for the wise to solve,
And mirth sat e'en upon the old,
As they their meaning did evolve.

Rich was the food, and rare the wine,
Which Laban's guests each day enjoyed,
And while 'round these they did recline,
The harp and tabret were employed.

Sometimes a maiden danced with grace,
Sometimes a youth would show his skill,
And laughter rang throughout the place,
While wedding-guests partook at will.

Among them was a shepherd-swain,
Who had for making lays a gift,
He often to the harper's strain,
His voice to minstrelsy would lift.

His was the prophet's vision, too,
Of future things, of these he sang,
He strangely told what some would do,
When his frail lyre should silent hang.

Inspired he sang of "Jacob's Star,"
Which in the heav'n should brightly shine,
Its lustre reach to nations far,
And never in its strength decline.

He told how Rachel's name should be
Forever linked with love divine,
How lover's plaint or rhapsody,
With its sweet music would combine.

He sang about the lion's roar,
About a race of wondrous might,
Like sand upon the ocean shore
In number, through the ages' flight,

Who would the story of the love
Of Jacob and of Rachel tell
And bless the God who kept their vow,
And through it made his Israel.

And thus in mingled mood did glide
The festive days, at last did come
The hour when Jacob sought his bride,
That he might lead her to his home.

Surrounded by a group of men,
Of youth, he on the seventh night,
Marched from his tent along a glen,
Amid the torches' flickering light.

Amid the songs and mellow notes
Of shepherd's pipes he went to meet
Sweet Rachel, whom now heaven clothes
With honor at the Saviour's feet.

From out the bridal-home then came
The veilèd virgin and her maids,
Each carrying a sacred flame,
To guide them through the gloomy glades.

Beneath the starry vault of heaven
These parties met, and here the wine
Was poured by Laban's hands and given
For each to drink—that cup entwine

Their lives in one—a holy band,
Man's first great sacrament of love,
Decreed and written by God's hand,
And sealed by cherubim above.

Upon her hand he placed a ring,
And gave the pledge which made them one,
Then to his tent his wife did bring,
Rejoicing that his prize he'd won.

The wedding-guests dispersed, withdrew,
The feast was ended; in the morn
Each guest his homeward journey knew,
And left a bridegroom all forlorn.

For Laban Jacob had deceived
And Leah giv'n him for his wife,
Therefore his soul was greatly grieved
And spurred itself to bitter strife.

But Laban said: "In Haran's land
It custom is to first bestow
The eldest on a suitor's hand—
And she is first born of the two.

"Fulfil her week, and I will give
Thee Rachel also for thy wife,
Thus both are thine, and they shall live
Together, strengthening thy life.

"But thou must serve sev'n other years
For Rachel, idol of thy soul;"
And Jacob said, his voice in tears,
"For her I give my life, my all."

And love, ideal, still was his,
Which like the wing of butterfly
By human touch disfigured is,
And wounded left, perhaps to die.

'Tis better far to love and wait,
And drink the soul's pure marriage-wine,
Than in man's sensuous way to mate,
And feel a wounded love repine.

Man's lode-star, guiding with its beams
The yearning heart to better things,
Though never reached, except in dreams,
It gives his thoughts immortal wings.

POEMS OF THE SEASONS

MAPLE-BLOSSOM TIME

A tint of purple 'mid the green
Of tender buds and leaves,
It is the silken tassels seen,
Of flow'ring Maple trees,
Seen 'gainst the softness of the light
Of April-morning's dawn,
As the last shadows of the night
Flee from the verdant lawn.

And as I look with ecstasy
Upon the blossom rare,
A purple robe it is to me,
Such as a king doth wear,
Above it is the bursting bud,
A head with crown it seems,
On which a dewdrop, like a stud
Of diamond, brightly gleams.

Yea, spring is e'er magnificent,
And comes in royal state,
To souls whose joy is almost spent
In struggle with life's fate,
It says: Arise, and look a while,
When day is in its prime,
And to thy heart will come the smile
Of maple-blossom time.

A SUMMER MORNING

Sunlight that quivers in diamonds of dewdrops,
Sparkling in meadows of sweet-scented clover,
Light from heaven's infinite blue, God's own smiling,
All things embracing with love, the world over.

Music that wakes in the woodlands and valleys,
Harmonies wafted on breaths of the breeze,
Merriest notes with the mourning-dove's blending,
Undertones mellow, the sighs of the trees.

Man goeth forth to his labor and sorrow,
Scarcely he pauses to worship and wonder,
Blind to the present, he lives in the morrow,
Prating sometimes of the "glorious yonder."

Teach me, O singer, that flits 'mongst the branches,
How to find joy in the light of each morning;
Grant me your wisdom, ye flowers of the meadows,
Angels of God, nature's bosom adorning!

A SUMMER EVENING

The sun in splendor sinks behind the hills,
The dark green hills o'er which the shadows creep,
Already I can hear the Whip-poor-will's
Clear call to singers of the day, to sleep.

From meadows, where the clover blossoms send
A matchless scent upon the evening breeze,
The well-fed herds now slowly homeward wend,
Their pathway partly hidden by the trees.

Some farmer boys sing from a load of hay,
Their horses moving with a weary pace,
It is the last big load they fetch today,
To help to fill the barnloft's lessening space.

A peace rests over all things far and near,
The peace of God is upon land and sea,
It lies caressing in the atmosphere,
And whispers of His love most tenderly.

AMONG THE ASPEN TREES

Music of the morning-breeze,
Playing through the aspen trees,
Rising, falling,
Whisp'ring, calling,
Filling heart and mind with peace.

Never music made by man,
Thus the soul enrapture can,
'Tis the sweetness,
And completeness,
Of the great, immortal Pan.

Voices from an unseen sphere
Fall upon the list'ning ear,
And their measure,
Full of pleasure,
Tells that heav'n to earth is near.

Here I'll rest this morning hour,
Gaining for life's toil new power,
From the singing,
And the ringing
Music of this Aspen bower.

THE INDIAN SUMMER

The autumn sun beams through a sleepy haze
Upon the woodland's red and golden leaves,
And on the flocks of sheep which browse and graze
Among the length'ning shadows of the trees.

The breeze moves gently with a mellow sigh,
While here and there a leaf is heard to fall;
How calmly now sweet summer seems to die,
And what a peace is resting over all!

The insects and the creatures of the ground
Their winter homes already have prepared,
And in the air I heard a rapid sound
Of migratory birds which southward fared.

Long since the flowers fled from field and bow'r,
And only one remains—the golden-rod—
Bright emblem of our nation's lasting pow'r,
Its petals by the pathway smiling nod.

All withered stand the brier and the weed,
And silken thistle-down now broadcast flies,
A thousand herbs and plants yield up their seed,
Each one declaring: Nature never dies.

The sumach's garb is dyed a crimson red,
It humbly stands along the forest's edge,
For grief of summer's leave its heart has bled,
Of its return it is a loving pledge.

And here, where winds the limpid little stream,
Forever lulling forth a mystic lay,
I hear the story of the summer's dream,
Which finds its climax in this autumn day.

A MORNING STROLL IN THE COUNTRY

What great delight to roam about this bright
October day,
Along the winding country road where whisp'ring
grasses stay;
To listen to the cricket's song the last one of the
year,
For last night's frost reminded us that winter's
reign is near.

The farmer plows his furrows broad, the hunter's
on the hill,
The quails are 'mong the shocks of corn for their
unstinted fill,
The cattle low from half seared meads, the wind
sighs in the trees,
And 'neath the clear blue sky of God the black-
bird southward flees.

The spider's web sails through the air and streams
from straw and fence,
The silken filaments of hope which seeks and
reaches hence;
The wingèd seed, borne by the gust, its lodging
place shall find,
And nature in its smallest things, shows forth the
Father's mind.

YELLOW LEAVES

This autumn morn the sunbeams fall
Upon the forest's golden leaves—
And tell in mystic language all
What oft the human spirit grieves:

The fleetness of our summer days,
  The dying of a life so sweet,
The hushing of a thousand lays,
  The withered flower before our feet.

That melancholy mystery
  Of things that were and be no more,
Of hopes which rose exultingly,
  But now lie wrecked on Pluto's shore.

Yet, sadness is not fit for thee,
  Who found in better faith a light—
A gleaming from eternity
  O'er life's dark grave and glory's blight.

The yellow leaf, the summer's death,
  The vanished glory of a day,
They are but symbols God hath set
  Of things that live with him for aye.

A DAY IN LATE AUTUMN

The golden and crimson leaves to the ground
Are falling, fluttering round and round.
The barren trees sing a mournful song,
"The summer was brief, and the winter is long."

And under the heavy cloud a cry
Comes faintly from flocks which southward fly.
The clouds are weeping their tears of rain,
Which trickling fall down my window-pane.

And the children's eyes are filled with a dream,
How sad to their souls this change must seem!
But the fire is brisk and the kettles sing,
And winter its comforts soon doth bring.

A WINTER NIGHT

From out the dark blue deep the pallid beams
  Of Luna falls upon the forest bare,
And on the soft, deep snow which brightly gleams
  With stars and jewels numberless and rare.

The long, dark shadows of the trees are cast
  Upon the field of white, and specterlike
They wave fantastically in the blast,
  And with their long arms 'gainst each other
    strike.

Sometimes is heard a weird and muffled groan,
  As if a combatant were wounded in the fight
And left to die unfriended and alone
  Beneath the moonlit canopy of night.

"It is the creaking of some broken branch,"
  Says Reason, and its knowing voice I hate,
I am a child again, and feel the trance
  Of mystery come o'er me with its fate.

This night my soul is born again to feel
  And know the Spirit of the universe,
To see the truth which symbols do reveal,
  To feel the joy which each of these confers.

And thus the light, the shadows and the sound
  Enthrall my soul with raptures all divine,
My God, my life and love tonight I've found,
  And all in one henceforth I shall entwine.

SNOW

It snows;—the fleecy flakes are falling fast,
And clothe the naked branches of the trees,
The weeds are standing with their heads downcast,
The fence-posts wear such caps, one seldom sees.

The air is dim with snow, and everything
Is wrapt as in a dream, the houses and
The people, walking, to whose footsteps cling
The prisms, all things seem like fairy-land.

And now I see the fairy, garbed in white,
In furs from head to foot, a child of three,
She wades, up to her knees, with great delight,
And rolls and basks about with fairy-glee.

The purity of soul meets that of snow,
My child, how great thy happiness must be;
Heav'n's emblem kissing thy angelic brow,
So thou thy home-land's light may clearly see.

And I, too, 'mid the scene, a gleam perceive
Of what was lost by folly and offence,
And though I joy with her, my heart doth grieve
To think that life can mar such innocence.

THE INVISIBLE ARTIST

My window-pane, which was all clear
Last night behind the blind,
This morning with designs most queer
I decorated find.

A maze of ferns and tropic leaves
Luxuriantly grow,
Fantastic outlines, too, of trees,
In diamond-lustre glow.

An unseen artist's cunning hand
Did make it in the night,
A picture from the spirit-land,
With occult shade and light.

A CHRISTMAS EVENING IN THE CITY

The snow, like down, is covering the street,
And glitters in the bright electric light,
And fondly clings to thousand hurried feet,
Which homeward wend their way this holy night.

The church-bells peal a happy Christmas chime,
Their deep tones partly muffled by the snow,
It seems like music from the heavenly clime,
Which brings good will and cheer to men below—

To weary minds and souls, with cares opprest,
To hearts on whom dark sorrow casts its gloom.
To all it brings a sense of sweetest rest,
And joyful hope, that conquers o'er the tomb.

O'er every home there broods a peace divine,
And heav'n doth whisper to the childlike mind,
And souls who to its mystery incline,
Still may the Christ-child in the manger find.

Yea, find Him 'midst the poor outside the inn,
Within the humblest dwelling, as of old,
May be within the dark retreats of sin.
May be upon the streets, half starved and cold.

And they that find Him with unfeignèd love,
Relieving want, bestowing heartfelt cheer,
To such there comes a rapture from above,
And they the song of angels still may hear.

THE MELTING OF THE SNOW CASTLE

I see from my window how drifts of snow
Are melting away, into streamlets flow,
And castle and fort which the children's hands
Have toiled to erect, each in ruin stands
And weeps and weeps in the April sun.

I also must weep in my silent way,
While thinking how joys of their childhood-day
Must pass like these vanishing castle-walls,
Where once they were lords in its fairy-halls,
With health on the cheek and a lot of fun.

And near by the castle is found a sea,
O'er which the strange shadows of spring-clouds flee,
I watch little faces reflected, too,
While ships are sent out to that isle they knew,
But the sea is only begun.

THE PLEASURES OF WINTER

The sky hangs dark and heavy o'er the hills,
Not yet it emptied has its treasure-trove
Of woolly snow, though every bush and tree
Stands mantled in their fluffy robes of white;
Still more will follow ere another morn,
Until the sedge along the frozen brook
And dark-brown weeds beside the country road
Are almost buried, save the tallest ones,
Rich promise of delightful winter sports;
Already now upon the silent air
Some distant sleigh bells send their tinkling forth,
A merry music from a fairyland.

From yonder hill come shouts of youthful strength,
And happy laughter from the vale below;
Behold how down the slope with arrow's speed
A lad is gliding on Norwegian ski,
And leaping into space, he lands erect
Below the dip, and safely gains the vale,
Great sport, which liberates the mind from care,
That sends the glow of health into the cheeks,
And joyful lustre to the steady eye.

Another scene of merriment I view,
A group of children coasting down the road,
And where it turns, shoot o'er the river-bank
Across the wide and solid-frozen stream;
In quick succession come the loaded sleds,
Each steered by some heroic little lad,
Upon whose skill more timid hearts depend,
Some clinging little maidens rosy-cheeked,
Who shriek half with delight and half in fear,
As down the incline with great speed they run;
Nor is this sport confined to such alone,
But in the long, enchanting moonlight nights
The frolic-loving youth may here be found,
Tobogganing, while in the jolly crowd,
With mischief, cupid lurks and rides along,
And plays with tassel-caps of comely girls.
The moon's alluring light adds to the spell,
And dreams arise whose future none can tell.
But oh, most brilliant of winter sports
Is that of skating on the frozen lake,
When like a mirror it reflects the sun;
What great diversity of fun it gives:
Exciting races of a mile or more,
The curling game, which Scotchmen love so well,
The artist's mastery of graceful curves,
Engraving his initials with one stroke,

The youth who on his knees with fondness straps
The skates upon a maiden's dainty feet,
Then lends support to her unsteadiness;
With interlocked arms they move along,
But soon her eye espies a resting-place,
A tree-trunk or a rock near-by the shore,
Where she, an amateur, may find surcease
From painful ankles—to such sport unused,
And while she rests and chats, she wonders if
She e'er shall match the company she sees,
Of men and women skating with such ease.

Another kind of pleasure winter yields,
Which has a charm for age as well as youth:
The happiness of long, dark evening hours,
When storms are raging and the frost is keen,
The snow a-whirling 'gainst the window-panes,
Where ghosts of dead plants have been photographed,
When wildly moans the wind around the house,
And darkness like a pall hangs o'er the earth,
Then there is pleasure in reclining near
The cheerful fire that flickers on the hearth,
While some good book of bard or prophet sooths
And warms the soul with lays or wisdom's lore.

Around you then, perhaps, your dear ones dwell,
Your wife and children happily engaged
In such pursuits as each does most prefer,
While at your feet the watch-dog lies and dreams,
And on the couch the cat purrs with content;
A spirit of sweet restfulness and joy
Dwells 'mid the little circle of the home,
Augmented by the contrast of the fierce
And boisterous elements that war without.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

VERSES

Written on visiting the State University of South Dakota, during its Commencement, 1905.

Once more upon Missouri's banks I roam,
Once more I gaze upon its current strong,
And listen to the music of its roar,
Which filled my soul in days of youth with song.
And carried me away unto a dreamland's shore,
On fancies light as foam;
But now its deep and rushing melody
Has sadness in its note, and like a dirge
It rises from the ever moaning surge,
*About a name most dear to memory.

Once more those verdant hills I shall ascend,
Where oft I used to rest at close of day,
To hear the bittern's penetrating cry,
As from its marshy home it made its way
Through evening's dusk, in spiral flights on high,
Or slowly it did wend
Its course along the vale, until its call
Was lost as in a dim eternity,
And then a feeling of the mystery
Of life and death laid hold upon my soul.

Once more I tread these walks familiar,
And linger 'midst the elms we planted then,
And muse in halls where we as students met
To praise a name most noble among men,
It had our admiration then, but yet

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*Dr. Edward Olson, president of the University from 1887-1889. He was killed at the fire of the "Tribune" building, Minneapolis, November 30, 1889.

More lustrous now, a star
That grows in brightness as the years roll on,
To strengthen faith in immortality,
That souls of truth, of love and purity
Forever have the life abundant won.

Once more with class mates do I gladly meet.
More than a decade has now passed away,
And we are young and full of courage still,
Though we have tasted some of life's affray,
And tried the metal of our manly will,
Which knew of no defeat;
How different our tasks and pathways are,
But we are one tonight, as when of yore
Our toilsome recitation-hours were o'er,
And nought could us from sportive glee debar.

Hail Alma Mater! Sweet it is to dwell
One single day within thy festive halls,
And feed the mind on recollections dear!
How everything some scene and act recalls,
Which draws the mirthful smile, and then the tear;
For who can truly tell
The story of those school days and their dreams?
Yea, long, long dreams are they, the poet says;
And may they guide us in the better ways
To honor thee whose name with glory beams!

Verses, read at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the University of South Dakota, 1906.

Ye breezes from the verdant plains,
That bear the scent of fragrant flowers,
Ye wingèd hosts, whose liquid strains
Resound through shady woodland bowers;
Ye streams whose deep melodious tune

To dance invites the sun and moon;
Ye sounds and harmonies divine
Lend me your sweetness and your power
To tell the meaning of this hour
Within the State's most sacred shrine.

All hail! Our Alma Mater, hail!
All hail! Thy sons and daughters true
Have come to greet thee, to unveil
The glory of thy past, to view
Thy works of five and twenty years;
With pride, with joy that moves to tears,
We read thy splendid history,
A record of a noble strife
To shed the light of truth on life
And point our paths to victory.

And we have come from far and near
To see thy hallowed walls once more,
Thy halls, thy walks, thy fields are dear,
Linked with sweet memories of yore;
These memories today we fain
Would muse upon and live again
In their deep joy and ardent dreams,
Until our hearts grow young as then,
Until the world seems bright as then,
And heaven's warm sunshine on us beams.

Here winters long were rightly spent
In quest of wisdom's holy light,
And oft our weary heads were bent
O'er ancient lore through hours of night,
But as the truth unfolded was,
Or, as we found a hidden cause,
How did a pleasure fill our soul,
As if a treasure we had found!
And ever since a heavenly sound
This word "eureka" has for all.

How often o'er the hills we roamed
And o'er the forest's mystic path
To where Missouri rushed and foamed,
To hear its roar and see its wrath,
Until a longing filled the breast
To ride upon the billow's crest
To follow on, to see and know
Our dreamland in the far away,
The land we've sought until this day
And still shall seek till sunset's glow.

And then, oh, then remember, too,
That little classic god, his pranks,
How cruelly his arrows flew
In halls, o'er hills and river banks,
How some were wounded e'en for life,
Sweet wound to him who found a wife,
Among Athena's daughters fair,
But some the matter lightly took
And hid the arrow in some book
While others lost were in despair.

And ye, the heroes of the field,
Ye sportsmen true of bat and ball,
What pleasure still those exploits yield
To you, whenever ye recall
The trousers torn, the ankles sprained,
If by such sacrifices gained
The honor was for Alma Mater;
How willingly ye suffered then,
And learned to act like gentlemen,
While extra bills were sent to pater.

In Northern sagas we have read
Of Aslaug who, though but a child—
And both her royal parents dead—
Was sought by foemen grim and wild.
Within a harp she refuge found,
But when the poet came to sound
Its chords, with some heroic lay,

He soon descried and straightway knew
The child, whose birth, the eyes so blue
And golden ringlets did betray.

Thus do these memories of youth,
So dearly kept within our heart,
Unwittingly in life's pursuit,
In manly deeds, in song and art
Appear and their bright colors lend
To darker hues with which they blend,
And thus betray their ancestry:
The freedom of the western plains,
The buoyant hope which always reigns
Within our University.

Was e'er a people's horoscope
Of future power more truly cast?
Was e'er an institution's hope
More steadfast than the one thou hast,
Dear Alma Mater? Prophet's sight
Not needed is to see thy might
Five decades hence, for thou must grow
With this great State and always be
The index to its destiny,
And with thy torch before it go.

Once here a noble leader stood,
And those who knew him loved him well,
Of greatness and life's highest good
With eloquence we heard him tell.
This was the motto that he gave,
Which lustre shed upon his grave:
    Nobility of Service true
    Divinity of Sacrifice,—
With this in life, my friends, we too,
Shall run the race and win the prize.

WHEN THE MESSAGE CAME

Written on the morning of Governor John A. Johnson's death, September 21, 1909.

"Our governor is dead," the message came,
With early morn to thousand anxious hearts,
And in the solemn hush we speak his name,
While to our eyes spontaneously starts
The furtive tear, for now all men do feel,
Forgetful of their party, creed and place,
That here we lost a man of truest steel,
Who did our state's exalted office grace.

And he did pass away in such a night!
The elements forbade the world to sleep,
While he was fighting out his last brave fight,
While dear ones round his couch did sorely weep;
The heavens wept, the autumn winds did moan,
The thunder rolled, the lurid lightning flashed,
For oft, when souls, like his, must pass alone,
All nature's forces seem to anguish lashed.

The morn 'rose calm, the sun was on the wold
The rain-drops glittered on the yellow leaf,
When that sad message to our hearts was told;
It cast a glory round the sable grief,
An hour of calm in which the people blend
Their benedictions on a noble life,
An hour when this great land, from end to end,
Thinks thoughts of kindness and does cease from strife.

At The Hour of the Interment

The bells send forth their melancholy notes,
They blend their music through the mourning state,
From cities, towns and hamlets gently floats

Their harmony to heaven's open gate,
A commonwealth, 'midst busy toil does pause,
To listen to each knell and dying wave,
Yea, Minnesota weeps this hour because
Her foremost son is carried to his grave.

And solemn dirges ring in church and hall,
And men whose tongues the fire divine has touched,
Extol his name, his life of service call
To memory, in phrases kindly couched,
And mothers sit beside their hearths and say:
A son may yet become his mother's pride,
And when he finished has life's working day,
He may come home to slumber by her side.

Half hoisted floats the flag upon the breeze,
The emblem truly sacred to his soul,
The flag which knows no nationalities,
But freedom and equality for all,
The emblem of his life, which e'er shall be
His glory, as a leader and a man,
For he did truly love humanity,
This Swedish-born, a true American.

THE PASSING OF BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON

April, 1910

The last great singer of the North is dead!
Weep for him now ye children of his land!
Yea, all on whom his genius has shed
Its radiance, but for one moment stand
And feel with us, how heavy sorrow's hand
Is laid on Norway; over it doth hang
A pall of sadness, stretched from strand to strand,
For hushed is now the voice that truly sang,

And hushed the chieftain's speech which through
the country rang.

He was his country's most beloved son,
And therefore does she make a great lament,
Her lover and her Viking-skald is gone,
His mighty powers in her service spent;
Her heart he language gave and was content
With nothing but her glory and its dream,
Of which the golden fabric now seems rent
With grief, since death has dimmed that wondrous
gleam
Of vision which within his soulful eyes did beam.

Our Björnson dead! oh, who can realize
His passing? he who was a fount of life;
Who gave us inspiration, made us rise
To follow great ideals, e'en through strife,
Who, when the hour of freedom's cause was rife,
His people bid to strike and gain the hour,
Who not with Vikings' weapon, sword and knife,
Won victories, but by his spirit's power
Brought freedom's enemies to yield and cower.

The poet of the heart and home is dead!
His lyre lies broken on the crags of time,
Kind hands have laid to rest his noble head,
That head which like a god's wore the sublime;
Such as we saw him in his best and prime,
Amid a worshipping and cheering throng,
While he did bid us ever higher climb
To live above life's littleness and wrong,
For then our hearts may know the power of his
song.

How world-wide grew his fame, we now discern,
Since he has finished life's exalted ways,
And nation's thoughts now to his country turn,
Expressing sympathy, but mostly praise,
A fame that lends a glory to his race,

And in this western world, from shore to shore,
From thousand hearts goes forth a cry:
"Our prophet and our singer is no more,
One of the world's great master-singers is no more!"

It was not ever thus, but some recall
That from his people he almost was driven,
Because their ways and thoughts were far too small
For such a mind, to whom the new was given;
And dark'ning clouds by threat'ning storms were riven,
While far away he wrought their destiny,
And then they hailed him chief, since he had striven
To make them free; at last right royally
A man of war his resting corse brought o'er the sea.

His last home-coming o'er the shining fjord
Was like a monarch's, where he held his throne,
The people's heart was with the bard on board
The coming ship, where he did rest alone.
And as the sun on thousand colors shone,
Half mast and drooping in the quiet air,
He came that April Sunday afternoon,
And Norway wept, but not in dark despair,
For April was his month, and all his life was fair.

And he shall rest within the hallowed ground
Of his own land for which his heart did beat,
But in the ages yet to be, his mound
Will be a Mecca, where the pilgrims meet,
And with devotion his great name repeat,
Yea, link it with another's* as the twain
Bright stars, with lustre most replete,
In Europe's northern sky, for ne'er again
A singer of the North may to such heights attain.

*Henrik Ibsen.

BOSTON W. SMITH

(A Tribute)

A life of goodness is a work of art,
And mightier than that by sculptor's hand,
'Tis beauty beating through a human heart,
Shaped into action and a perfect man.

"Art for art's sake," and he that loves the good,
Because to him it is most beautiful,
By him God's harmony is understood,
To him ne'er duty's voice seems stern and dull.

He sees this beauty in the childlike life,
The life our Master blessed and bid us live,
And this his highest aim amid the strife,
To bless, to cheer, and good example give.

And such was he whose passing we lament,
Whose life seemed moulded by a touch divine,
Whose years and energy were freely spent
Christ in the child more clearly to define.

And all the hosts who looked into his face,
While simple words were teaching truths profound,
They felt the beauty of the Christ-like grace
And love which thousand hearts to him have bound.

A life like his can never cease to be,
Its beauty is increasing day by day,
And though his spirit now from earth is free,
His labors live in other lives for aye.

LINES ON AN OLD, DECAYED TREE

Thou swarthy giant, stretched upon the ground,
And partly hidden by the graceful ferns,
The moss and lichen circling thee around
And richer growing, as thy body turns
Into decay, the home for busy ants,
The silken nest of spiders and cocoons,
And where the brown thrush ofttimes sits and chants
His wondrous song in summer afternoons.

I wonder how long since the thund'ring crash
Of thy great fall resounded through this wood,
How long since thou, beneath the lightning's flash,
A crownèd monarch of the forest stood;
Long since, I ween, but still more strange it seems
To think of all the years of thy long life,
Thy hundred summers with their mystic dreams,
Thy hundred winters with their storms and strife.

With thee familiar was the red man's gaze,
And in thy shade strange lullabies were crooned
To Indian babes, while fathers sought the chase,
And arrow-stricken deer in thickets swooned;
Oh, couldst thou speak, what stories of the wild,
What scenes of peace and war couldst thou relate,
To please the sage or fancy of the child!

Like thee all things must have their day and die,
The mighty as the weak return to dust,
Great nations with each other sought to vie
In pow'r and glory, oft by means unjust,
And one by one decayed, then came the fall,
And earth reclaimed what she had lent a while;
"Oh, vanity of all things," says some soul,
But on the tree the evening sun doth fall.

DANDELIONS

She's flitting like a butterfly,
Golden-haired and dressed in white,
O'er the lawn, where'er her eye
Can detect the flow'r of light,
Spring's first dandelion bright.

Hear her laughter, see her pull,
And in pulling, toppling o'er,
Now her little hands are full,
And she cannot gather more,
Comes to me in ecstasy;
"See my flowers, papa see!"

And I take her sweet bouquet,
Which is like a mass of gold,
All—so many eyes of day,
As their petals they unfold,
They and baby's joy are one,
Glory of the morning-sun.

And I see, in memory,
Country road-sides all aglow,
With this flower's strange witchery,
Which my boyhood life did know,
But that spell of charm is gone,
With their petals long since flown.

THE SONG OF THE WOODTHRUSH

This eve as through the woods I strolled,
Enchanted by their mystic shades,
A contrast to the evening-gold,
Which richly decked the verdant glades,
I heard a note so liquid, pure,
So full of joy and sportive glee,
A song that proved a sudden cure
For that lone hour's despondency.

From yonder treetop welled the song
Upon the still and fragrant air,
He sang until I felt how wrong
It is to burdened be with care,
He carolled quite indifferent
To who might listen to his strain,
And knew not, when his song was spent,
It had allayed a burning pain.

Thus let me sing, to ease my heart,
Though no one listens to my lay,
Yea, sing it without thoughts of art,
Or what the learnèd men may say,
For God who dwells in all said—"write
What thou canst faintly hear and see,
The music of the shade and light
As heritage I give to thee."

LAKE POKAGEMA

Blue, glimmering lake, amid the gentle slopes
Of hilly shores, in verdure richly dressed,
Mirroring the light of heav'n, like the hopes
Within a maiden's eye, yet unexpressed,
The floating clouds are by thy waves caressed,
While they seem searching for the shining pearls,
Which thou art hiding deep within thy breast;
I love to be on thee, and as my sail unfurls,
I seek the isle where now a faint smoke upward curls.

A village of Ojibways on this isle
Once stood, and from its wigwams rose
The silv'ry smoke to meet the evening's smile,
And die away into the night's repose;
At early morn the fishing did engross
The stalwart men, or through the mighty realm
Of forest lay their sport, alert lest foes
Should stealthily appear and overwhelm
Their peaceful homes beneath yon lofty elm.

The foe did come one day in budding May;*
Now long ago, more than a hundred Sioux
Attacked the island in a fiery way,
And cowardly two helpless maidens slew;
Of their own warriors they lost but two,
Though fiercely raged the battle for a while,
The enemy reluctantly withdrew,
And the Ojibways kept their pleasant isle;
Proud heroes of the past! where's now your rank and file?

On yonder banks some lonely graves are seen,
Each sheltered by a little house of boards,
Which half decayed and weather-beaten lean

*The battle of Lake Pokagema occurred on May 24, 1841.

Up to each other, graves of native lords,
Chiefs of this realm and of its roaming hordes,
Whose days of pow'r have vanished with their race,
Whose graves, forsaken, without sign or words
To tell their history, and soon the ways
Of modern man will leave of these no single trace.

Pokagema, the story of thy past
Is writ in water; yet in summer nights,
When on thy breast the full moon's light is cast,
Outlining shadows from the wooded heights,
Thou hast for seeing souls the sweet delights:
A weird, sad music trembles o'er thy waves,
The isle seems visited by phantom wights,
And fleeting shadows move among the graves,
A fairy lore of black-eyed maids and warlike braves.

A SONG ON THE RIVER

Mystery of woods and river,
  In their varied hue,
Deepest melancholy darkness,
  Brightest sunny blue;
Mystery of sound and silence,
  In their minor key,
Nature's thousand-throated chorus,
  Liquid harmony.

Here the heaven and earth are blending,
  And all things are one,
One great heart throb, one unending
  Life and hope beyond;
God, thou omnipresent being,
  All pervading love,
How the soul is lost in seeing,
  Asking why and how!

No—no questioning, nor piercing
  Through the mystery,
Only trusting, sweetly resting
  In whate'er shall be;
Light and shade and song and silence
  Parts are of one whole,
And a joyful faith the rudder,
  Steering to the goal.

THE CATARACT

I. At Night

Calm is the night, not a roseleaf is stirred,
Only the cataract's music is heard,
Weirdly it falls on the listening ear,
Something seems singing a lay of the past,
Ceaselessly singing, until it has cast
A spell o'er my soul with a feeling of fear.

Voices are heard from the murmuring deep,
Speaking of races who peacefully sleep,
Mingling their dust with the far-stretching plain,
Races who roamed on this rock-riven shore,
Children of nature, who heard in the roar
Music which ne'er shall be fathomed again.

Weird grows the night, yet how pleasant its dread,
Tarry, my soul, with the shades of the dead,
List to their epic, Oblivion's price,
You may discern it; it comes like a dream,
Murmuring; then it flows out on the stream,
Ever its cadence doth fall and rise.

II. By Day

Bright is the day; how majestic it 'rose
Over the hills in the distance, which close
'Round the fair city that sits like a queen,
Ruling a castle of granite whose towers,
Aged and moss-covered, rise 'midst the bowers
Of thickets and groves in their midsummer's green.

Bright is the day, and its beams are at play,
Painting a rainbow on silvery spray,
Gleaming and glittering over the surge;
Gone are the shadows and dreams of the night,
Now from the cataract, out of its light,
Wonderful voices and visions emerge.

Buzzing of factory wheels on its shore,
Rumbling of traffic is heard in the roar,
Industries run by its harnessed might,
Rushing of trains and the speeding of cars,
Cities whose myriad lights with the stars
Vie their great strength in the darkness of night.

THE AWAKENING OF THE FAIRIES

Long have my childhood fairies slept
Within the chambers of my soul,
Perhaps sometime they woke and wept,
Sometimes, maybe, I heard them call,
But they were hushed again to rest,
And long and deep their slumber grew,
And I did think that this was best,
While searching for the "good and true."

But oh, this morning as I woke,
And heard the music of the storm,
And saw wild winter's master stroke
In drapery and sculptured form,
Marked how the trees were clad in white,
Their trunks like marble pillars stand,
How everything within my sight
Had changed into a fairy land,

I felt the sleeping fairies wake,
I heard them shout and leap for joy,
They of my soul control did take,
Until I grew once more a boy,
Fantastically did we play
Among the veilèd mysteries,
And o'er the chiselled drifts which lay
Like thrones of gods beneath the trees.

Now have I found the "good and true,"
Which for so long has been my quest,
Almost with shame this thing I rue,
It slept so long within my breast,
For only childhood fairies know
The truest self and purest bliss,
Therefore amid the whirling snow
Their angel faces I will kiss.

PAN

Pan is not dead, nor sleepeth,
I heard his voice today,
Though now from man he keepeth
His haunts so far away,
Deep, deep in the recesses
Of forests wild he roves,
His presence seldom blesses
Man's well trimmed little groves.

Where moss-grown giants tower
Like temple-domes of green,
Above the shady bower,
With gleams of light between,
Where ferns and moss are vying
To deck the checkered floor,
And where the winds are sighing,
Or wild and loudly roar,—

There sat the old enchanter
And played his dulcet reeds,
When they are heard, instanter
All life his music heeds,
Its harmony is charming
Each beast that chased the prey,
All creatures cease from harming
And Pan's sweet pipes obey.

Yes, while their notes were sounding,
My soul knew such a rest
And joy, so full, abounding,
That I forgot my quest,
Yea, lingered long and musing,
What human life would be,
If Pan returned, infusing
His notes of harmony.

COME, REST THYSELF

Come, rest thyself, thou anxious, weary toiler,
Thou hast not strength enough to spurn the spoiler—
Time's strong obliterating hand;
Five decades will have buried out of sight
Thy great endeavors and heroic fight,
And made thy name forgotten in the land.

Come with me from the city's noise and hurry,
From all its soulless scheming and its worry,
And rest in some fair sylvan glen!
There listen to the happy minstrelsy
Of winged warblers, till thy soul, set free
From sordid cares, is light again.

Come, learn the art which Hellas' children learned,
While to the mighty Pan they incense burned
On altars midst some olive grove,
The art of living in the present hour,
To drink the cup of joy in Nature's bower,
Forgetful of the wrath of Jove.

Come, learn of Pan, for he is ever living,
Quaff the elixir which his founts are giving,
And life abundant shall be thine,
Thus snatch from greedy death a few more years,
Fill these with sunshine, not with morbid fears,
So shalt thou neither languish nor repine.

A MEDITATION

Last time I wandered o'er this hill,
And looked upon the distant scene,
The woodland stood in richest green,
And music did its bowers fill;
Today the aged oaks are bare,
Their russet leaves are on the ground,
And silence reigns, except the sound
Of scolding squirrel, rustling hare.

How changed the scene! The only thing
Which to my soul remains the same—
A mystery, without a name,—
The same in autumn as in spring,—
It is the forest's undertone,
The deep and melancholy note,
Which from the solitudes remote,
Comes to the soul that is alone.

And in this music rest I find
For all the longing of my heart,
I feel myself almost a part
Of that great universal Mind,
Whose voice the undertone now seems,
The Father's whisper to his child,
While through the dome of forest wild
The glory of the sunset beams.

A REVERIE

I was standing on the seashore, as the sun in glory
set,
All enchanted by a music which I never shall for-
get,
'Twas the music of the billows, as they came with
foaming crest
From the far off realms of glory 'mid the moun-
tains in the west.

In the dazzling splendor heaving, an abandoned
wreck was seen,
Sometimes lost beneath the surges, then resplend-
ent in the sheen,
And from all there came a moaning with the
music of the sea,
As from broken heart sa weeping, 'midst a song of
victory.

And I thought of Life's great ocean, with God's
light and love aglow,
With the restless tide of mankind, wildly surging
to and fro,
And its longings, aspirations, and its hopes of
what shall be
On the distant shore of glory, bordered by Eterni-
ty.

On the hidden rocks lie stranded ships that proud-
ly sailed the main,
Dashed and wrecked unmercifully, struggling
with the deep in vain;
And the anguish and the sobbing of the lost,
abandoned souls,
As an undertone comes floating, and the listener
appals.

Like the sunshine which is kindly playing with
each rolling wave,
Meets the wreck with heaven's caresses, as it
rises from its grave,
So the love of God encircles ev'n the wrecks on
Life's great sea,
Of their tears and hopeless anguish ever mindful
He shall be.

And the music of the billows, as they came with
foaming crest
From the far off realms of glory 'mong the moun-
tains in the west,
While I stood upon the seashore, and the sun in
splendor set,
Still enchants me, and its meaning never more I
shall forget.

THE STAR OF MY CHILDHOOD

O star that twinkles in the blue
Expanse of heaven this silent eve;
How many a time my childhood knew
The happy dreams which thou canst give!
As o'er the mountain's brow thy light
I met some breathless summer night.

O days of hope, O days of dreams,
That never have fulfilment known,
An age which dead and past now seems,
A joy which is forever flown;
O star that twinkles, yet the same,
Thy gleams are burning like a flame!

Yes, burn the stubble and the chaff
And all the worldly trash heaped up,
And let me of that nectar quaff,
Which filled my childhood's golden cup,
Until regret and grief are quenched,
And in my soul the child entrenched.

O luminous, resplendent star!
Shed on my way thy guiding ray;
Since to my home 'tis yet so far,
And many an hour till break of day,
That I may see one step ahead,
And take it without doubt or dread!

AMOR IMMORTALIS

There is a place my soul has often sought,
A place among some rocks of strange formation,
By nature's hand fantastically wrought,
A cool retreat for dreams and meditation,
A poet's nook, where his imagination
Plays with the shadows in the mossy caves,
And brings to him a somewhat weird sensation
Of dwelling midst old sepulchres and graves,
Their caverns now re-echoing the sighing waves.

For nearby flows a river deep and wide,
Made turbulent by leaping water-fall,
And waves roll in against the craggy side
Of that steep shore and utmost cavern-wall,
Its sighs and murmurs gently rise and fall
On breezes wandering through cave and grove,
And mingles with the melancholy call,
From deep recesses, of the mourning-dove,
Who woos his mate in tend'rest tones of love.

Here also is the shade of gnarly oaks,
Around whose trunks the tender creepers twine,
And here and there the dark green ivy cloaks
The ragged rocks; here, too, the columbine
Is neighbour to the prickly eglantine,
And dainty orchids have sought out a place,
Where only morning's sun does flick'ring shine,
And blue-bells lend to crevasses their grace,
Adored by violets with half uplifted face.

Once here I did behold a vision fair,
A face of perfect lines and purity,
And eyes whose look became my soul's despair,
Forever their enchantment follows me,
Their depth shone forth love's immortality,
That love which ne'er was soiled by earthly touch,

But dwells within her realm ideally,
To whom man's sacrament seems a debauch,
And like a deathbed his permitted marriage-couch.

But only once, alas! did I behold
This vision; only once may mortal eye
Perceive such love, and none whose heart is cold,
And none who lets the youth within him die,
Or who does after lust and lucre cry;
To him alone it comes whom nature's moods
Give child-like fancy wings to heavenward fly,
Who from his dreams unholy thoughts excludes,
And one is with the happy spirit which here broods.

THE MEETING

Like ships that at midocean meet
On some calm, dreamy summer day,
As strangers one another greet,
While passing on, each one its way,
Yet in that meeting pleasure found,
Yea, cheer upon the lonely sea,
Where men grow weary with the sound
Of their own voice and company.

So was the meeting of the two,
While o'er the prairies rolled the train,
They never met before, yet knew
Each other through a poet's strain,
Which one did read and chanced to mark,
Then passed it on unheedingly,
The music of a soaring lark
Forgets conventionality.

Two souls well met who understood
Each other in the realms of light,
Two souls which blended in the good
Of human love and heavenly right,
Two souls, whose better selves were one,
And in this oneness found their rest,
Two souls that had each other known
For years—in life's exalted quest.

But on they sped and needs must part,
For nevermore to meet again,
As lone ships on the main of mart,
Alone amidst the crowds of men,
But never will the two forget
Their meeting, though some one may blame—
That none of them has ever yet
Found out each other's home or name.

To him, whose heart has weary grown
With mankind's shams and painted shows,
Whose faith in man is almost gone,
Because too much of man he knows,
It is a fount of strength divine,
To see the health which still is thine,
The health of body and of mind,
That glows in eye, in lips and cheeks,
Which in the heartfelt laughter seeks
Expression for its joy to find.

To studied pose and artful smile
A stranger thou yet surely art,
And simulation's hurtful guile
Is unknown to thy sincere heart;
Thy noble mind, so keen and bright,
Is like a flow'r that seeks the light,
The light of all that's true and good,
God's light, which from his throne does fall
Upon thy pure, awakening soul,
In thy glad morn of womanhood.

And unto him, who thus beheld
Thy *Self*, a benediction came,
A fount of hope and joy did well
Within his soul, and on the name
Of heav'n he called and all its host,
To keep thee to the uttermost
Unsullied from the wiles of men,
That we God's image still may see
And that our faith may strengthened be
In mankind and its aim and end.

TO A FRIEND

Like one who climbs the mountain-side,
To reach the peaks of glitt'ring snow,
Aweary marks the landscape hide
The restful, verdant vale below,
And 'midst the solitude does pause,
Half rueful that he undertook
Such toilsome journey for a cause,
On which men with disdain do look,
Hears from the wilds above a voice
Ring clearly through the light, pure air,
A call which makes his soul rejoice:
"Climb higher friend, but have a câre,
The path is steep and danger-fraught,
But oh, one gaze from yonder height
Is not thereby too dearly bought!"
And now as with redoubled might
He passes on from ledge to ledge,
To reach the one who gave him cheer,
To thank the friend who made him pledge
To be a nobler mountaineer.

Thus didst thou see me when I stood
Uncertain where my course should wend,
Down to the vale where life's great good
Is but to gain and gayly spend,
Or upward to the lofty heights,
Where one may speak with God alone,
And see his finger, as he writes
Eternal truths on ice and stone.
And thou wert far above me then,
And called, because kind is thy heart;
Thanks for the cheer which strength does lend
To find the heights of truth and art.

TO A FRIEND

I heard the voices of the spring,
All yesterday,
The robin's call did gayly ring
Along my way,
There was a note within that call,
Which woke to ecstasy my soul—
But yesterday.

And through the woodland's naked dell
A rivulet
With joy was rushing down pell-mell
To where it met
The river, singing merrily:
"Oh, I am free! oh, I am free
From chains of death!"

The breezes whisp'ring through the trees
To bud and bird,
Did tell the sweetest mysteries;
The poet heard,
And to his mind it now did seem,
All nature from its long, long dream
Was gently stirred.

And through it all, above it all,
He heard a voice;
Mellifluous its rise and fall,
With laughter choice,
And more in this, than in all notes
Of murm'ring streams and warbling throats,
He did rejoice.

AT HOME

Here in this dell, in this sequestered nook,
Where the linnet is vying in song with the brook,
Where the breezes are cool and the fragrance is sweet,
Where Solitude reigns in her happy retreat,
Here will I rest after wearisome toil
Of the pilgrimage long to my fatherland's soil.

It was here that I played, when a boy, long ago,
It was here, where the stream does most quietly flow,
That I angled full many a gold speckled trout,
And the joy was so great it broke forth in a shout,
It was here that I strolled in the shade, picking berries,
And barefooted climbed to reach the wild cherries.

It was here that my sisters and I used to twine
Our garlands of roses, the sweet eglantine,
And of lilies, forget-me-nots, daffodils too,
And all with a rapture I then only knew;
Then with this we adorned our toddling young brother,
Who went like an elf to our invalid mother.

It was here we sent navies and rich laden ships
Of birch bark and leaves and the wood feller's chips,
And we saw them float down on the glittering stream,
And with them went many a glorious dream
Of the lands far away, beyond river and sound,
Whose shores all through life I have sought, but not found.

VERSES

(*Suggested by a souvenir post card from home.*)

Oh, home of mine, my childhood's home,
Beyond the ocean's restless foam,
  For aye of me a part;
Wherever under heaven's dome
In search of happiness I roam,
  That happiness thou art.

While gazing on this picture dear
The eye cannot restrain a tear,
  So many memories
Arise from those sweet summer days,
When life seemed but a chain of plays
  Among the garden trees.

There in the distance, high and grand,
The pineclad mountain ranges stand,
  O'er which my fancies fled,
For oft I wondered what might be
Beyond those peaks, beyond the sea,
  Which evening painted red.

There runs the river calm and wide,
Forever changing with the tide,
  Our danger-laden friend,
Where we did fish and boat and swim,
Where, too, alas! our playmate, Jim
  Met an untimely end.

There by the road still stands the fir
Which ever seems to sing and stir,
  And in its top a nest,
A nest owned by a large, black crow,
Which evil omens seemed to know,
  Whom none dared to molest.

And there, close by, the school appears,
My wisdom's temple of those years,
  How much I love the place!
For here, to learning's endless way
My mother guided me one day,
  With tears upon her face.

In yonder meadow did I play
With boys and girls the livelong day,
  Full many were our pranks,
And sometime did I lead the way
Of companies to battle's fray,
  A captain then of rank.

And it was o'er this field I saw
A woman wading through the snow,
  A stranger-woman she,
The snow was deep, the wind did blow,
And painful seemed her walk and slow,
  A moving mystery.

She came and peered into the room,
Where I was sitting in the gloom,
  And oh, such chilling gaze!
No such a fear of death and tomb
Or of a last impending doom,
  Have I, as of that face.

She disappeared, nor did again
Her visage touch our window pane,
  And no one saw her then
But I—and it is quite in vain
For me the vision to explain
  With either tongue or pen.

THE DAWN

Lift thyself O weary thought,
And renew thy broken flight!
In the darkness thou hast sought
Glimmer of the morning light;
Now, behold, how far away,
Comes the harbinger of day.

Sever bonds of cloistered past,
And the dusty tomes of lore,
Fancied light may prove at last
All "the truths" to which man swore,
Labyrinth of mysteries,
Thousand inconsistencies.

Took it ages, aeons long,
Ere the sun shone in the blue,
Ere the stars their joyous song
Through their rhythmic courses knew.
How much longer must it take
For the spirit's light to break!

It is coming! faintly may
Our strange consciousness perceive
Rapture of the dawning day,
When we shall begin to live;
Therefore, weary thought, thy flight,
Keep through the remaining night.

THE GREAT SILENCE

I know that in the far-away
The world is busy now as aye,
That from its toil and enterprise
Discordant sound and voices rise;
Its cries and clamor often blend,
And seem the very skies to rend,

Its wailing and half muffled moan
Blend with its mirth as undertone,
Disharmonies—until they meet
In higher spheres as music sweet.

But here, in this secluded place
Great silence all things doth embrace,
The music of the brooks and streams
Is frozen into crystal beams,
The woods, with merry notes once filled,
Are now as if in slumber stilled,
And not a gust of wind doth blow
To move their shadows on the snow.
No naked branch or bush is stirred,
No voice of man or beast is heard;
And silence, clothed in moonlight pale,
Rules all supreme within this vale.

This Silence is the voice of Him,
Before whose presence cherubim
Bow down in holy awe, the voice
That blesses earth with perfect poise
And peace, and nature's great heart thrills
With joy, allaying fancied ills;
Which speaks of vast immensities,
Of light and flowing harmonies,
Of love, the essence of all things,
Of beauty which gives life its wings
To lift itself above man's ways
Of sordidness; of truth whose rays
Lead man's inquiring spirit through
Perplexing labyrinths into
The light of God's own day, these three,
Heaven's door to immortality.

Great Silence! I am lost in thee,
As I *and* all at last must be,
The final goal, the destiny
Of man, to which all souls shall flee
And find sweet rest, unbroken rest,
In God's own bosom, ever blest.

NORWAY

There is a land of strength and light,
  Far in the northern sea,
With summer-days without a night,
  And grandest scenery,
Where snow-capped mountains mirrored are
  In fjords and ocean-bays,
Where verdant valleys, near and far,
  Sustain a sturdy race.

A land of saga and of song,
  Where ancient Vikings dwelt,
Whose hearts were brave and arms were strong,
  Who runic wisdom spelt,
Who yearned for conquest's bloody fray,
  Till Europe feared their sword,
Who made o'er boisterous waves their way,
  For distant lands to lord.

Ancestors of a people which
  Loves the heroic deed,
And after high ideals reach,
  Not slaves of sordid greed;
Still heroes from its mountain heights
  Are speaking to the world,
Still in defense of mankind's rights
  Thor's lightning-bolts are hurled.

O Norway, land of light and strength,
  My mother's resting place!
Through all this world my journey's length
  Cannot thy love efface;
And proudly do I speak thy name,
  'Mongst nations strange to thee,
Believing that thy ancient fame
  Shall ever unstained be.

A BOATRIDE ON LAKE SANBORN

O'er the placid lake the moon-light,
  Like a path, lies shimmering,
In which thousand little ripples
  Laugh and dance a-glimmering,
Ripples caused not by the breezes,
  But by slowly moving oars,
As our boat the space increases
  From the shadows on the shores;
Where the stately pines and birches
  Stand reflected in the deep,
Where the timber-wolf still lurches,
  And the owls their vigil keep.

Onward do we glide while dreaming,
  Speaking, too, of distant things,
For the moonlight's mystic gleaming
  Lends to languid fancy wings;
Speak of things which noble-hearted,
  Lofty-minded souls do know,
Of the great, long since departed,
  Of the new, which onward go;

Of a master-minstrel singing,
  Of "the Lady of the Lake,"
Of some new voice clearly ringing,
  Telling mankind to awake.
And my friends, one, a musician,
  Hears the voices of the night,
And the other has a vision
  Of life's struggle for the right.

Thus we glide, and I, the rower,
  See the storm-cloud 'neath the moon,
Know the hour of dream is over,
  Hear the weird cry of the loon;
And we turn our prow, discerning,
  How our cottage on the height

Has a dim light kindly burning
Like a beacon in the night.

THE WOODS

Birch and poplar and pine,
Blending their wonderful shades,
Grand, when the sun doth shine,
Strange, when the daylight fades,
Alder and cherry-trees,
Willow and sapling oak,
Ferns and flow'rs to the knees,
Bowers of the fairy-folk.

Here do I love to dwell,
In this temple, alone,
And list to the music's swell,
Its sadness of undertone,
The pine-tree's diapason—
I heard it in childhood days,
It ne'er from my heart is gone,
Not even in the songs of praise.

Here is an odour rare,
Such as no altar has,
Borne on the morning-air,
At the bird's matin-mass,
Health it imparts to the breast,
Life is enthroned on its breath,
And here the weary may wrest
Years from the hands of death.

Primeval forest, to thee
Oft will my thoughts return,
For thy sweet mystery,
Often my soul will yearn;
When 'mid the crowds of men,
While 'mid the toil and strife,
Oft will I think of thee then,
Long for thy glorious life.

ANGLING ON LAKE FAWN

Was it because a tender fawn was seen
Upon thy shore, half hidden 'midst the green,
That such a mellow name was given thee?
Or was thy likeness to the deer's soft eye,
Thy oval limpidness, the reason why,
Some huntsman christened thee so fittingly?

I love thee as the look of the gazel,
In which the woodland's mystery seems dwell,
Yea, thou hast mysteries to sooth my heart,
When from my boat I see a sudden gleam,
And realizing 'mid a sunny dream
The pleasure of Sir Izaak Walton's art.

A three-pound bass, it was a lusty strike,
Such delving and such race as sportsmen like,
A thorough testing of my silken line,
But thou art mine at last, no common fish,
Thy nature fits thee for a royal dish,
But catching thee is better than to dine.

Another strike! thou rogue, I know thee well,
A hungry pick'rel one can always tell,
And though I deem thee less than any bass,
I always honor thy heroic fight,
And in thy golden speckles find delight,
Reminding me of something else, alas!

A sunfish next, the elfin of the lake,
A golden-purple thing, caught by mistake;
Return it to the deep?—no, it shall grace
My tackle at the closing of the day,
Like one sweet pansy in a rose-bouquet,
Where on its beauty happy eyes shall gaze.

Thus do I spend the languid afternoon
And evening, till the rising of the moon,

A-sporting with the lake's spry denizens;
But, now from yonder shore a call is heard,
And all the echoes, and myself are stirred,
A call to supper with my camping friends!

It is not fit that in iambic feet
The number of my fish I should repeat,
Sufficient for a burden 'tis at last,
When o'er the forest path my way I wend,
As darkling shadows o'er the water bend,
And one last look upon its face I cast.

A VISION

I saw stretched before me a river,
  Which coursed through a valley most fair,
Its waters did ripple and quiver,
With light they did ripple and quiver,
  But also with shades of despair.

And the trees on the banks of the river
  Were yellow and crimson and sear,
The aspen did rustle and shiver
In the wind of the autumn did shiver,
  As if moved by the spirit of fear.

The bitter-sweet stood there a-bending
  Reflected way down in the deep,
Like blood drops it seemed, darkly blending,
With Stygian shadows a-blending,
  Like blood drops of hearts that do weep.

A heron was over it flying,
  And followed its swift, winding course,
And weirdly resounded its crying,
As when a lost soul is a-dying,
  A cry as of hopeless remorse.

And onward it flew till appearing
  As only a speck 'gainst the sky,
Was lost in a light that seemed leering,
A light that seemed laughing and leering,
  Where lost was the bird and its cry.

And stemming the stream, with endeavor
  A rower made slowly his way;
"Oh, must I be toiling forever,
Thus painfully toiling forever?"
  These words to himself he did say.

"The goal seems forever receding
Though sometimes, I think it is near,
Mirages, perhaps, and misleading,
Mirages most bright but misleading,
At times just before me appear."

A whisper he heard: "Not forever,"
It came with a solace of rest,—
"Life's day has its close and its never,
The toil and the toiler must sever,
The rower shall cease from his quest."

And the light that seemed leering and mocking
The heron, as westward it flew,
Caressing the boat that was rocking,
The boat that was struggling and rocking,
Changed into a glorious hue.

DEPTHS

There is a jutting precipice,
  Among the Rocky Mountains,
And far below a deep abyss,
  Where flows a gleaming fountain,
It has the gleam of serpent's eye,
  When on some prey 'tis playing,
Until one hears a helpless cry,
  And sees a blind obeying.

And I have felt its drawing might,
  Its power's strange embracing,
While from that steep and dizzy height
  Into the deep a-gazing,
Yea, felt a wild impulse to leap
  Into the gleaming fountain,
Where the unhappy spirits weep,
  The spirits of the mountain.

I've seen the storm and raging waves,
  Midways the great Atlantic,
The storm which hardy sailor braves,
  While passengers are frantic,
I've seen upon the billows' breast
  The mighty ocean steamer,
When sinking far below its crest,
  All hidden but the streamer.

I've felt the pow'r by which 'tis drawn,
  It is a weird sensation—
The greenish waters 'round one yawn,
  While from the elevation,
One sinks and sinks into the deep,
  And verily is grateful,
That the good ship its own doth keep
  'Midst elements so fateful.

I sat once at a master's feet,
  A man of mighty learning,

His words with wisdom were replete,
The laws of truth discerning,
He led us to the dizzy brink
Of science, to explore it,
He taught us how to search and think,
And finding truth, adore it.

But all I ever could achieve,
'Mongst men who facts are linking,
And all I ever could perceive
In ways of truest thinking,
Is this: there is a depth, a realm,
From which the mist is clearing,
And all its wonders overwhelm
My soul, while fondly peering.

There are two eyes that follow me
Where ever I am roaming,
I saw them on the stormy sea,
In day-dawn and in gloaming,
I saw them on the mountain tall,
And in the deep below me,
I saw them in the college hall,
Where e'er I go they know me.

But neither depth of the abyss,
Nor of unfathomed ocean,
Nor learning's great profundities
Excite such strong emotion,
As does the depth of those bright eyes,
A depth of love enthralling,
And would you know whom it implies?
My baby-boy I call him.

CATHEDRAL CHIMES

From the distant lofty spires,
Outlined 'gainst the blue horizon,
Music, as of heavenly choirs,
Comes, sweet "Kyrie eleison,"
Soft and mellow are its notes,
As it o'er the city floats.

Something in those sacred chimes,
In their mystic undulations,
Speaks of past historic times,
And of ancient generations,
Of the faith that once was theirs,
And to which God made us heirs.

While the deeper, louder peal
Has a solemn admonition:
Not to spurn His "bruisèd heel,"
But yield to Him in contrition,
Lest we take the dust and dross,
For the glory of the cross.

Sabbath-rest, tranquility,
To the hearts of men are flowing
On the liquid melody;
While the golden cross is glowing,
With the light of wondrous love,
From the endless realms above.

And there is a prophecy,
In its tone of exultation,
Of a coming victory,
And the great King's coronation,
Of the age of harmony,
The millennium to be.

BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem, still bright with glory,
From the night when Christ was born,
Though with age and changes hoary,
Thine the splendor of the morn!

Royal city, whither wending
Still are wise men in their quest,
Who before the manger bending,
Find for weary souls true rest.

Still the rich bring forth their treasure,
Gold and frankincense and myrrh,
Love bestows ev'n larger measure,
Than the Magi did confer.

Still the lowly come inquiring,
Like the shepherd folk of old,
And with honest hearts admiring,
What of Bethlehem is told.

Children, too, God knows their number,
Thither in the fancy go,
Where they see the Christ-child slumber
On his bed of hay and straw.

See his star with lustre quiver,
Hear the song of angel-host,
Feel the joy which like a river
Flows from Eden's happy coast:

"Peace on earth, towards men good pleasure,
Glory to our God on high!"
Words which ne'er shall know erasure,
Bethlehem will never die!

GETHSEMANE

Behold the Son of Man 'neath yonder tree
Whose shadows, checkered by the midnight moon,
Fall upon him, while tarrying alone,
And prostrate on his face in agony.

The city. with its thousand pilgrims, sleeps,
And sweet repose broods over vale and hill,
No sound is heard, save Kedron's weeping rill,
And his low pleadings from the garden-deeps.

He prays: "O Father, be it possible,
Then let this cup of woe pass from thy son,
And yet, not my own will, but thine be done,
Be it not possible, not possible!"

He cometh to his own, who by the pow'r
Of sleep are holden—taxing was the day—
He rouseth them, and we can hear him say:
"Can ye not watch with me, Oh, but an hour?"

Again he goes to pray, and they to sleep,
The sweat of agony, like drops of blood,
Falls from his blessed face on blade and bud
And fragrant flow'rs which God's great secret keep.

Behold a sudden gleam, as of a flame,
An angel, sent from God to comfort him!
And though the cup must filled be to the brim,
He now will drink it to the dregs of shame.

Once more he prays, arising then to go,
A victor from the greatest battlefield,
Where to his Father's will he all did yield,
And in this pow'r goes forth to meet his foe.

What though a "friend" so-called, shall him betray,
Yea, though a host of enemies draw near,

Of these his soul now has no pangs of fear,
Majestic does he meet them on their way.

Gethsemane, thou melancholy place,
Where sorrow's shadows wait for human souls,
Where death's grim visage in the dark appalls,
Where also heav'n doth show some angel-face;

Through thee the pathway of most men must lead,
Sometime into thy darkness, where each heart
Must from some love or cherished purpose part,
Although for mercy it does humbly plead.

O bitter tears, O spirit-bruising woe!
O darkness of the unrelenting grave!
O fate why dost thou of frail mortals crave,
That through such place of anguish they must go?

That each of us with Christ may learn to say:
"O Father, not my will, but thine, be done,"
That each of us may be his child, his son,
And learn life's greatest wisdom, to obey;

That we may see God's hidden angel stand
Close by our path, for mostly they have seen
His light and felt his comfort who have been
In that dark garden with the Son of Man.

CONSUMING FIRE

The night is past, its rest consumed
With burning thoughts and spectral fears,
And hopes which led me on through years
Are in the deepest dark entombed.

Already falls the burning beam
Of glaring sun upon my bed,
Who knows by what this heat is fed,
What forces spent in every gleam?

But we do know that warmth and light
Spring forth from some consuming fire,
And without these, life must expire,
And death reign through an endless night.

And we do know, that every day
Unnumbered forces are employed,
And lives, uncounted, are destroyed,
Lest man should perish on his way.

Thought is consumed—thought to impart,
Life given, that new life may be born,
And with the dawn of each new morn
There is the breaking of some heart.

The soul which after freedom yearns,
And to eternal life aspires,
Must know the sacrificial fires,
And God's voice in the bush that burns.

For a consuming fire is He,
Immutable in truth and love,
And life is found, when we know how
To let His will sufficient be.

Then shall the night yield sweet repose,
And we will thank him for the strife,
And praise Him for the truer life
Which from the ashes thus arose.

A REMEDY

Oh, when the days are dreary,
  And clouds are hanging low,
And you feel sad and weary,
  Your soul oppressed with woe,
Then seek your consolation
  In music's harmony,
And find new inspiration
  In some sweet melody.

I heard it in the gloaming,
  As on my couch I lay,
And my sad thoughts were roaming
  Back to a brighter day,
When all at once came ringing,
  Upon the evening air,
A maiden's happy singing,
  Whose heart was free from care.

The song was simple, tender,
  And quite devoid of art,
But just the kind to render
  Peace to a troubled heart,
And I arose from brooding
  Upon "what might have been,"
And grief left off intruding,
  When I let music in.

FAITH

The soul's advancing Morning roseate,
Whose eager steeds and burnished chariot
Speed from the gloomy vale of Doubt and Fate;
The brooding clouds of Fear he heedeth not,
But passes over them triumphantly,
And scatters flow'rs upon their frowning brow,
Exuberant with joy, he nought can see
But life and love in the eternal Now.

A stream which from a welling fountain flows,
With mirth and music through the flow'ry meads,
Through dreamy dales where cool the June-wind blows,
At play with roses and the tender reeds,
And while it onward goes, it gains in pow'r
From rills and brooklets all along the way,
And swells and broadens with the summer-show'r,
A mighty river as it meets the bay.

A seed laid in the soil, whose latent life
Awakes in darkness, seeking after light,
And piercing through the mold, begins the strife
'Twixt summer-suns and winter's chilling blight,
Increasing yearly both in size and strength,
With crown luxuriant and luscious fruit,
And when its fulness has been reached at length,
It dies, a perfect witness to life's truth.

PERDIDI DIEM

I've lost a day, how great the loss!
I've lost the gold and kept the dross;
What crime is this against my soul,
'Gainst God, humanity and all!

I've lost a day, each golden hour
Did summon me to use its power,
To do, to bless, to build, attain,
But every hour rang out in vain.

I've lost a day; with crimson blush
It died amid the evening's hush,
It blushed to know how little we
Do use our opportunity.

I've lost a day; O God forgive!
Be it thy pleasure I shall live
To see another dawn of day,
Help me its summons to obey.

WHAT LIVES

From the fount of his soul it sprang,
  From the depths of his life it came,
The song which he freely sang,
  Without thoughts of reward or fame,
He sang with a mind aglow,
  But not with a thought of art,
For the fount of his soul did overflow,
  And his song was the song of the heart.

Full many a book he wrote
  Of learning and thoughts profound,
And scholars with pride did quote
  His doctrines as true and sound,
But years have rolled on since then,
  And knowledge gained larger fields,
And scarcely a book of his now wields
  Any pow'r o'er the spirits of men.

But consigned to the dusty shelves
  Of the well equipped library,
Where the book lover sometimes delves
  Into works of antiquity,
They stand like a monument,
  In a mighty necropolis,
To him who most earnestly spent
  His life on their "verities."

Through these he can hardly live,
  As centuries pass away;
The song he did freely give
  Will grant him a name for aye,
For the heart does outlive the head,
  And the world will preserve its song,
And long after doctrines are dead,
  The heart lay is sung by the throng.

DON

His Death

It midnight was, a fair, warm summer night,
And in the garden stood the rose in bloom,
But nature's charms were marred by one sad sight,
Which pained our hearts and wrapt our souls in gloom.

Beneath a lilac-bush, stretched on a plaid,
Poor Don with death a dreadful combat fought,
And we did give him what we knew of aid,
But all in vain and with disaster fraught.

The household soon retired, and I alone
Did watch him till his last breath he had drawn,
With eyes now staring at the new-born moon,
He passed away before another dawn.

Then from the hills was heard a doleful cry,
A piercing wail which froze me to the core;
Was it a homeless soul which cannot die,
But doomed to wander on forever more?

The Bereavement

First came the youngest; in his lovely face
A solemn question instantly we read,
With ardor he his mother did embrace,
And passionately asked if Don was dead.

The sad news seemed his tender heart to pierce
With grief which I could scarcely comprehend,
But none who saw it could refrain from tears,
It was a lamentation o'er a bosom friend.

"My Don, my pretty Don, my dearest pet,
The best one of them all, is dead! oh, no!
My mama, tell me he is living yet,
I want him now, because I love him so!"

"Oh, it is true, then come and cry with me!
Come all and weep, for pretty Don is dead!"
All with him wept, except his brother, he
Mourned all alone, while hiding in his bed.

And through this day, yea, all the next, these two
Young brothers strode about like aged men,
And of the cherished playthings nothing knew,
But sorrowed for their comrade's tragic end.

The Burial

In one far corner of our yard I made
A grave below a maple's shady crown,
And there our snowy-breasted collie laid,
While clear behind the hills the sun went down.

And heav'n, all radiant, with glory beamed
Its benediction on the swarthy mound,
And on the life, whose little day now seemed
With golden love to us so closely bound;

A love the children showed in their own way:
Next morning I found one large rosebush robbed,
And on Don's grave its fragrant glory lay,
While nearby stood the oldest boy and sobbed.

A SONG ON THE TRAIN

A car full of swarthy "Dagos,"
  Among them a stripling lad,
His raven locks were all unkempt,
  And he was most poorly clad,
But in his dark eyes was soul-fire,
  While on his accordion
He played us a tune from his homeland,
  The land of the Rubicon.

The land of the luscious vineyards,
  Of citron and orange groves,
The land where from grand Vesuvius
  The gossamer vapor moves;
I read in those upturned faces
  The joy of the simple heart,
And fancied I saw from one dark eye
  A glistening teardrop start.

The melody did enrapture
  My soul and its hidden life,
And opened the secret fountains,
  Sealed up by a sordid strife,
The with-holden grief and sorrow
  Burst forth like a torrent strong,
And flowed with the simple music,
  Till spending itself in a song.

And then as the music was changing
  To measures more light and gay,
The song I had heard in the spirit,
  Became an unwritten lay,
But o'er me there came a gladness,
  Like sunshine that comes after rain,
My spirit refreshed, I thanked the youth,
  As vanished the last clear strain.

THE EMIGRANT

He stood on a naked cliff one day,
And gazed o'er the ocean wide,
While many a fisherman's boat on the bay
Came in on the swelling tide.

So unruffled lay the sunny deep,
As lulled in a golden dream,
And like to a snow-white swan asleep
The far-away sail did seem.

Then out from that hazy glory-scene
Rose visions of fairest hue,
A country of gold and orchards green,
And men of a freedom true.

How fast beat his heart with a longing wild,
To be on its happy shore,
Oh, were he but there with his wife and child,
He sorrows should know no more.

"America, oh, America!"
With exulting voice he cried,
Then vanished the vision, and Barbara,
His wife, stood there by his side.

But then he resolved, that another spring
Should not find him at Andeness,
For there would the future him only bring
Dire poverty and distress.

And over the ocean far they sailed,
America's shore to reach;
Nor out on the prairies wide they failed
A dwelling of sod to pitch.

His sinewy arms toiled not in vain,
Work yielded its true reward,

A beautiful home rose on the plain
And he was its happy lord.

But sometimes the rocks and sunny sea,
And visions of fairer things
Would come like a dream to his memory,
And bear him on fancy's wings;

And then how he wished himself on that cliff,
To breath in the fresh sea-air,
To gaze on the distant sunny skiff,
And visions of islands fair.

THE FRONTIER FARMER

Oh, the bleak and endless prairie,
On this cold November day!
Nothing for the eye to rest on
In the hazy far-away,
Nothing but a dreary sameness,
Where soe'er you chance to roam,
Pity on the lonely settler,
Who has made this waste his home!

Oh, how barren his surroundings,
And how cheerless seems his life!
Yet he loves his humble sod house
And his children and his wife,
If you speak to him he answers
In a tone of cheerfulness,
He has grown to be a prophet
Of this dreary wilderness.

He within himself is living,
Nursing dreams of what shall be,
Farms of plenty, towns of traffic
In his vision he can see,
He beholds his sons and daughters
'Midst the fruitful orchards dwell,
Where now Indian paths are winding,
And where skulking coyotes yell.

He is hero of the prairie,
And his wife an heroine,
Toiling, and themselves denying
Comforts which are thine and mine,
That the arid plains may blossom
Like the rose some future day,
That the progress of this nation,
Everywhere may have its way.

Hail to thee, thou patient toiler,
Uncrowned conqueror of the plains!
May thy dreams come true, rewarding
All thy loneliness and pains,
And while winter's storms are raging,
And thy heart does weary grow,
May God cheer thee with his glory
Of the western evening-glow!

THE JEW

The people of the Lord, strong in their faith,
Strong in their error,
Abiding with the form of what "He saith"
And by its terror,
A scattered, persecuted people they,
Which none have vanquished,
Though nations on them everywhere did prey,
And rudely banished.

The blood curse has come, indeed,
on their head,
And on their children,
Alas for the maimed the ravished and dead!
And who did kill them?
Russian massacres, Russian shame,
Heinous sensations;
But others have done exactly the same,
Civilized nations!

The wandering Jew—everywhere despised,
Homeless, forsaken,
He knows the whole world and its commerce
has priced,
Ere it is taken,
Sometime 'twill be his, and then he is king,
Freed from his fetters,
Alas, if the Lion of Juda shall wring
Blood from her debtors!

A DARK NIGHT

I hear the roaring of the troubled sea,
Its billows break against the rocky shore,
The night is dark and full of mystery,
So weird it never seemed to me before.

"The Lord doth give to his beloved sleep,"
The opiate which angel-hands prepare,
But I must toss about and vigil keep
With burning thoughts and peace-destroying care.

My soul is in the dark, and like the sea
Is turbulent, and seeks in vain for rest,
It struggles toward the shore, only to be
Dashed back with pain upon a sobbing breast.

The sighing, soughing, groaning of the wave,
Become its language and its music, too,
And something calls me to the liquid grave;
A voice, a power which often called and drew.

Still, I must never listen to obey,
But wait and suffer through another hour,
Soon will the first gleam of a newborn day
Dispel the night and its uncanny power.

Yea, I will battle till the last long night
Shall calm or stormy round my spirit close,
Perhaps I then, when finished is the fight,
May on some distant shore find sweet repose.

October, 1906.

THE SUNBEAM

Why should my spirit, wrapt in gloom,
Be listening to the sluggish beat
Of my own heart—as to its doom—
When in the sunray at my feet
A child—a darling babe—is playing?

If fickle friends thy trust abused
And trampled on sincerest love,
Why shouldst thou be so low, so bruised,
When still the sun is bright above,
And at thy feet a child is playing?

God's love is surely yet the same,
It smileth through those clear, blue eyes,
And full of glory stands His name
In golden beams amid the skies,
And falls upon the child—while playing.

Thanks be to Him—that not alone
In utter darkness I am cast,
Thanks to the Son who did atone
For me—so I dare trust at last
His changeless love, around me staying.

HOW CAN I MY LIFE MAKE WORTH LIVING?

How can I my life make worth living?
I queried my spirit one day;
The answer that came was: By giving
Your best self to others away;
For only by living for others
You follow the path that Christ trod,
Who taught that all men should be brothers,
And walk in the love of our God.

In this there is exquisite pleasure,
And life everlasting to be,
In this a reward without measure,
When I from myself am set free;
For sordid, self-seeking ambition
Gives nothing but pangs and dismay,
And hides from man's soul the fair vision
Of things that abideth for aye.

And such is the wisdom of sages,
Unheeded by man in his quest
Of happiness;—thus read the pages
Of God's Book, in speaking of rest.
And yet, who amongst us are learning
This wisdom that comes from on high,
Whose hearts with divine love are burning
For others to live and to die?

A VISION

This night methought I saw my mother's face,
Among the shadows of the moonlit trees,
And heard her whisper on the gentle breeze,
Such as I heard it in my childhood days.

And she appeared the same as on that morn
Now fully six and twenty years ago,
When weeping she declared she loved me so,
And would not let me from her arms be torn.

When I did promise, that ere many years,
I would return and dwell within her home,
I knew not then what things to me should come,
And saw but mother's love through parting tears.

And she did long and look for me, they said,
But I did ne'er again her face behold,
When I returned, she slept beneath the mold,
Alone I sorrowed where her dust was laid.

Of all the sorrows which my life has met,
This has the keenest and most lasting pain:
That she should ask and look for me in vain,
As if my vow to her I could forget.

Tonight methought I saw her soulful face,
But without tears and former sufferings,
It had a radiance of unseen things,
Such as we read of in the heavenly place.

And I would fain have burst the earthly bands,
To be with her in God's fair Paradise,
Where no one ever sorrows, suffers, dies;
But as I called her name, with outstretched hand,

The vision vanished; but that moment gave
My soul a newborn faith in things beyond,
And of our meeting there I'll not despond,
Nor fear the terror of the earthly grave.

THANKSGIVING

1913

For all the greatness of our land,
For all its riches and its power,
For this, that it doth proudly stand
A bulwark in an evil hour,
For this, oh, Lord, we thank thee!

For thou hast made us what we are,
And givest strength still more to be,
Thou givest light, it shines afar,
And lights the darkness of the sea,

O'er which the millions come to seek
Their heritage, seen in that light,
In varied tongues we hear them speak
Of hopes arising 'mid the night.

We thank thee for sufficient bread
To feed the hungry and the poor,
Abundance hath her glory shed
Upon the garner-house and store.

But most of all we render praise
For growing truth and righteousness,
Which curb oppression's subtle ways
And succor nations in distress.

And on this day, when clouds seem dense
With trouble in our *neighbor's realm,
May these alone be our defense,
And be the power at the helm!

*Mexico.

GWENDOLYN

Gwendolyn, child of my heart!
  Blue-eyed baby of scarcely a year,
Sweetest and dearest thou always art,
  Be thou a-smiling, or shedding a tear.

Verily angel of God,
  Camest thou hither from spheres of light,
Cheering a soul who weary did plod,
  Sometimes in darkness and night.

Peace as of mid-summer eve,
  Song as of birds among sunlit trees
Little embraces of thine me give,
  Kisses more sweet than the honey of bees.

Now as the sun goes low,
  Tenderest light in blossoming mead,
Music and fragrance seem overflow,
  Love ne'er the o'er-brimming measure doth
    heed.

Thus shall our lives ever be,
  Thus shall thy love be my evening light,
And thy glad laughter shall melody
  Lend to the songs which I may indite.

ROSES

In a cut-glass vase on a chiffonier
A bunch of roses is comforting Grief,
So fresh from the bush, that the parting tear
Of the dewy morn is still on the leaf.

The room seems dim, for the curtains hang low,
And silence broods where sad hearts think,
But the roses stand where the light does flow,
So large, so glad, so exquisite pink.

They say to the mother who lost her child:
"Behold our beauty—of form and hue!
Wonderful! Yet in a little while
It passes forever from thy view;

"And we shall be like the lily-face
'Mid the golden curls that encircle it,
Laid low in death, and the grave's embrace,
And be no more where but shadows flit;

"Yea, shadows the form, the colour and all—
(Which gladden and trouble the hearts of men)
Of that other world and the Oversoul,
Appearing a while, then vanish again.

"And ours is the glory of Him who said:
'Man in our image now let us make!'
And though the dust in the dust be laid,
The rose with the child shall again awake."

A FRAGMENT

There are looks which are soft like the velvety
brown of a pansy,
A presence so flitting and fair, as the dreams of
my fancy,
There are words which have music like rippling
of brooks in the dingle,
A vision of beauty in which all sweet harmonies
mingle.

THE INFINITE

Not what the eye beholds, not what the ear per-
ceives—
Is all;
Back of the light, we see, is splendor greater,
Back of the harmony, we hear, is greater harmony.

The word, we utter, is not all,
The thought is greater,
Nor is the thought, but more than it, the soul.

Back of the soul, the infinite,
The Oversoul, of which it is a part,
The "Mothersea" of light and harmony,
Reflected dimly by the truest art.

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